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ABSTRACT

This issue of an annual journal contains 20 papers reflecting on the efforts of U.S. employment security and training programs to meet the needs of veterans. Part I, "National Perspective," contains five essays: "Policy Issues for Veteran Job Training Programs" (Martin F. Smith); "Cognizant Ramblings: Superfluous Lags the Veteran on the Stage (Vanity of Human Wishes)" (Larry W. Rivers); "Women Veterans...Toward the Year 2000 and Beyond" (Diana D. Danis); "Civilian Occupational Labor Market Information System: A Project to Help Veterans" (Gary Crossley); and "NVTI--Three Years from Ground Zero" (Priscilla Donovan). Papers in part II, "Local Perspective," are the following: "The Employment Characteristics of the Disabled Vietnam-era Veterans in Idaho" (Robert Michael Wilson); "Views from a Local Office" (Gerald L. Kessel); "A Survey of Veteran Staff Members' Perceptions of Veterans Service Needs" (Ken West); "Making Title 38 Work from the Bottom Up" (Charles M. Kerns); and "Veterans Workforce 2000 Issues: The Tank Driver's Dilemma" (John Stine). Ten essays make up Part III, on "Local Office Programs"; they are: "Employment Security/Armed Forces Network" (James F. Wallace); "The Veterans Representative and the Armed Forces Recruiter--An Employment Counseling Approach" (Jorge B. Gonzales); "JTPA IV-C for Veterans in Florida" (Dee Campbell); "Reintegrating the Homeless Veteran through Employment" (Joy Jenko); "San Antonio Homeless Veteran Placement Project" (Arthur R. Underwood, Jr.); "Compensated Work Therapy" (Peggy Black, David Knapp); "The Texas Job-Search Seminar Counseling Connection" (Don Watson); "Vocational Information Profile: Innovations in Employment Counseling" (Kenneth D. Freeman); "Veterans in the Work Force in the Year 2000" (Alonzo Philmore); and "CARS and CAP: Employment Programs for Veterans that Produce Results" (Jim Grass). (KC)

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PERSPECTIVE

Essays and reviews of issues in Employment Security and employment and training programs

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Employment Services Needs of Veterans

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Vol. 5 1989

Perspective: essays and reviews of issues in Employment Security and employment and training programs is published by the International Association of Personnel in Employment Security. The subjects covered in the text are intended to fulfill two of the time-honored objectives of the association: to enhance the individual competence, knowledge and professionalism of members engaged in occupations in the field of Employment Security; and to provide a forum for the exchange of information on Employment Security and its related problems.

The International Association of Personnel in Employment Security is a non-profit, professional association representing individuals employed with federal, state and local govenments and non-profit organizations and working in the employment security and training programs of Job Service, Unemployment Insurance, and Labor Market Information, Job Training Partnership Act and other employment and training programs. Membership is open to anyone interested in employment security and training programs. Members reside and work in more than 40 nations. The association sponsors a full range of scholarship programs, communication vehicles and membership benefit programs.

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Preface

"We must treat each man on his worth and merits as a man. We must see that each is given a square deal, because he is entitled to no more and should receive no less."

--Theodore Roosevelt

America's veterans of military service are not asking for special favors. They only are asking for what is justly owed them for service to their country. That is a square deal -- no more, no less. This fifth volume of *Perspective: essays and reviews of issues in Employment Security and employment and training programs* reflects on the efforts of the United States employment security and training programs to honor this commitment.

From reading these submittals, one thing is clear -- the service provided to veterans has everything to do with the dedication of the individual providing that service, not with the program. If that dedication can be spread throughout all veteran programs, our nation's former military personnel would receive the service they deserve. It is that dedication that has spawned many of the innovative programs described in the following pages.

I.A.P.E.S. dedicates *Employment Services Needs of Veterans* to those same United States veterans of military service. The association recognizes the unwritten pact executed at their discharge that veterans receive priority service. It hopes that by furthering the knowledge of programs created to assist veterans achieve nonsubsidized employment it can help improve veteran employment opportunities.

The association thanks 1988-89 President Maryann Polaski, under whose administration this volume was started, and 1989-90 President Rick Hemming, under whose administration is was completed. The Research and Institutes Committee chairs who guided production were Thomas E. Ivory, 1988-89, and George Strait, 1989-90. This issue would not have been possible without the contributions of the I.A.P.E.S. Veterans Committee chairs, Charlie Brown, 1988-89, and Neal Thomas, 1989-90. A special thanks goes to W. Scott Boyd, association executive director from 1962-1981, who provided editorial assistance and guidance during all phases of production.

Michael R. Stone
Editor

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Part I:
national perspective

Policy issues for veteran job training programs

by Martin F. Smith

Job training programs long have been a cornerstone of the "comprehensive welfare system" established for veterans by the United States government.[1] From 1983-1987 the two major job training programs available to veterans through the state Employment Security system -- the Veterans Job Training Act and the Job Training Partnership Act -- were cooperative ventures that met with varying degrees of success. The best foundation for future programs was established by the VJTA, which was operated by what is now known as the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (formally the Veterans Administration) with assistance from both the U.S. Department of Labor and veterans' employment staff assigned to local offices of each state's Job Service.

Martin F. Smith is a Job Service Specialist III, a Local Veterans Employment Representative in the St. Mary's County local office, Leonardtown, MD, of the Maryland Department of Economic and Employment Development. In 1985 he received a Bradley Fellowship in Employment and Training Policy from the University of Maryland-Baltimore Graduate School and currently is enrolled in the PhD program. He holds a BS from Old Dominion University and an MA from Radford University.

In 1983 Congress identified a need to provide job training and placement assistance for veterans of the Korean conflict and Vietnam era who were experiencing long-term unemployment during the economic recession of the early 1980s. Public Law 98-77, the Emergency Veterans Job Training Act, was established to provide financial incentives for employers to hire and train long-term unemployed Korean and Vietnam veterans. Since the initial passage of the law, Congress has enacted several changes in the program, including a change of name from the Emergency Veterans Job Training Act to the Veterans Job Training Act.

Under the present rules for the VJTA program, veterans who have been unemployed for 10 of the previous 15 weeks are eligible to receive, depending on the occupation selected, on-the-job training with a private employer for up to nine months. (During the earlier EVJTA period, veterans had to be unemployed for 15 of the previous 20 weeks.) Applicants for the program are not required to pass an "income needs" test, nor do any family income-level restrictions exist. (Military retirees receiving pensions who meet the VJTA unemployment requirements also are eligible to apply for the program.) The employer receives reimbursement for 50 percent of the veteran's hourly wage during the training period, up to a maximum of $10,000. The $10,000 maximum also applies to some service-connected disabled veterans who may be eligible for 15 months of training under VJTA.

Restrictions on the veteran include denial of training in occupations for which they already are qualified by either military or civilian experience or education, and withholding of other types of educational programs for veterans such as the GI Bill. Sponsoring employers must provide full-time employment (no temporary or seasonal jobs) and certify to the DVA that it is their intention to continue the veteran's employment on completion of the training period. Restrictions on employers include not terminating other employees to hire VJTA trainees and prohibition from receiving any other state, local or federal training assistance funds for a veteran in VJTA training. Certain groups of employers are prohibited from using VJTA, including agencies of the U.S. government, religious organizations and political parties. State and local government agencies are eligible to apply for VJTA, as well as employers who are performing work under contract to the federal government.

Employers and veterans must submit applications to the Veterans Administration in order to participate in VJTA. The VA is responsible for administration of the program, including payment of benefits to participating employers. (Small businesses can be reimbursed monthly, while large firms must accept payments on a quarterly basis.) The U.S. labor department, using state Job Service veterans staff, performs most of the field operations for the VJTA, including job development with employers, registration of eligible veterans with the VA, matching veterans with employers and maintaining monthly contact with both veterans and employers during the VJTA training cycle.

Job Training Partnership Act

The Job Training and Partnership Act, authorized by Public Law 97-300, was enacted in 1982. Under Title IV-C of this legislation the Secretary of Labor is responsible for establishing programs to meet the needs of service-connected disabled veterans, veterans of the Vietnam era and veterans who are recently separated from active duty in the Armed Forces. Responsibility for the coordination of JTPA employment and training programs with other federal and state veterans' programs is assigned to the labor department's Assistant Secretary for Veterans Employment and Training, who also is responsible for supervision of the grant process for the Local Veteran Employment Representative and the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program staff assigned to state Job Service offices.

Due to limited funding under the JTPA Title IV-C grant at the federal level ($9.4 million dollars for federal Program Year 1985), most veterans who apply for JTPA assistance are being served under Title II-A (economically disadvantaged) and Title III (dislocated worker) programs. In order to participate in JTPA funded programs, veterans must meet income guidelines, with certain exceptions. Active duty pay and benefits may not be counted as income by JTPA service providers due to an exemption under Title 38, U.S. Code, enacted for the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act. Disabled veterans are exempt in most cases from income restrictions.

The veteran subpopulation that seems to benefit the least from JTPA programs is that of recently separated veterans. Since family income is used to determine JTPA eligibility, many young veterans who are married cannot pass the income guidelines unless their spouses are unemployed, or they are employed in low-wage jobs.

Because of the current trend by the federal government to permit states and local Service Delivery Areas to establish guidelines for the operation of JTPA programs, no requirements exist that mandate veterans be given priority in services under Title II-A or Title III JTPA programs. In testimony given to the House of Representative Veterans' Affairs Committee, subcommittee on education, training, and employment, on July 16, 1986, veterans' advocates Paul Egan and Dennis Rhoades indicated that state and local governments do not generally include a veterans' preference or emphasis in their JTPA programs.[2] As a result continuing debate exists over the structure and direction of employment and training programs for veterans.

Traditionally the primary responsibility for veterans' employment and training programs has rested with the Department of Labor and not the Veterans Administration. The major delivery agent for these services has been the veterans' employment staff assigned to local Job Service offices, who were funded by an ASVET grant. Since the implementation of the Wagner Peyser Act, which established the federal/state Employment Security system, veterans always have received both priority in service and special services from local employment offices.[3]

Under legislation proposed by the Reagan administration, control of local Employment Service offices would be given to individual

states, with the result that in the future veterans may not be granted the priority in services they now enjoy, or, the quality of employment and training services they receive may vary from state to state instead of maintaining the current uniform level of service provided under the Job Service/ASVET national veterans services program.[4]

Problems exist

It is apparent that problems exist with the present system of providing employment and training services to veterans due to the stratification of programs and funding levels. The largest single job training program for veterans, VJTA, is under VA authority, restricted to special populations of the Vietnam-era and Korean-era subgroups, and has been the beneficiary of more than $173 million in funding since 1983.[5] Except for the limited help available from JTPA Title IV-C grants (which must be matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis by states), JTPA Service Delivery Areas must depend on Title II-A and Title III programs to provide services to veterans, especially recently-separated, Vietnam-era and disabled veterans who are not otherwise eligible for VA assistance. Because of the income restrictions that can be applied to most veterans under the Title II-A and Title III programs, JTPA programs are not a benefit to which all veterans in the above subcategories are entitled.

While it is the responsibility of the Department of Labor to coordinate veterans' employment and training programs, the ASVET only can exercise direct control over the LVER/DVOP programs operated by the Job Service system, which are primarily targeted to provide labor exchange services. LVER/DVOP staff who are attempting to place veterans in job training must use either the resources of the VA or JTPA/SDAs to provide employers with financial incentives to hire and train veterans. As a result the effectiveness of the employment and training system for veterans is highly dependent on the degree of cooperation and coordination that exists between the Job Service veterans employment staff, the JTPA Service Delivery Area staff, and the U.S. Veterans Administration Regional Office staff assigned to educational and vocational rehabilitation programs.

A study of the VJTA program by the Washington, DC, based firm of Centaur Associates, Inc., indicated that as of June, 1984, 9,346 veterans were trained under VJTA, of which 39 percent completed training at an average hourly wage $6.60 per hour for completers and $6.14 per hour for dropouts. Of the veterans who did not complete training, it is estimated that between 52-61 percent left the VJTA program voluntarily, according to VA data and a follow-up survey conducted by for the Centaur report by the Research Triangle Institute of North Carolina.[6]

During the period from October, 1983-June, 1984, which covers roughly the same time span as the Centaur VJTA report, 61,000 veterans were enrolled under Title II-A of the JTPA. Approximately 30 percent were initially assigned to on-the-job training programs. Of the 35,000 terminees, 74 percent entered employment at an average wage of $5.25 per hour. The only data on veterans available for the

JTPA Title III program covers the period from July, 1985-June, 1986. Of the 18,700 veterans enrolled, only 14 percent initially were assigned to on-the-job training programs. Of the 16,800 terminees, 66 percent entered employment at an average of $7.04 per hour.

Data show VJTA success

Because substantial differences exist between the JTPA and Veterans Administration data reporting systems, it is not possible to make an accurate comparison of the effectiveness of the Veterans Job Training Act and on-the-job training services provided to veterans under Job Training Partnership Act Title II-A and Title III programs. What the available data does seem to suggest is that the VJTA program is a reasonable success, and that veterans who can meet SDA restrictions may be receiving an acceptable level of services under JTPA Title II-A and Title III.

The success rates as expressed in percentages for both the VJTA and JTPA Title II-A and Title III programs appear better when compared with the total veterans' employment picture. From July, 1985-June, 1986, 2,343,361 veterans were registered with local Job Service offices and 362,228 (15.5 percent) of these were placed in jobs.[8] However, during this same period only about 11,000 veterans were receiving VJTA training,[9] 22,000 were in JTPA Title II-A on-the-job training programs, and fewer than 3,000 were receiving JTPA Title III on-the-job training.[10] Therefore, roughly less than 2 percent of the veterans registered with Job Service offices were receiving on-the-job training through VJTA, JTPA Title II-A and JTPA Title III programs combined.

Congressional testimony given on March 18, 1987, by several veteran's service organizations indicates that support exists to continue the VJTA program. Veterans' advocate Richard Johnson has suggested that VJTA be expanded to include, among others, recently separated veterans, disabled veteran workers and homeless veterans. However, support for additional VJTA funding has been opposed by the VA and the Department of Labor. R.J. Vogel, VA chief benefits director, and Donald Shasteen, the former Department of Labor ASVET, stated that the Reagan administration felt veterans best are served under existing JTPA programs and the new dislocated-worker program.[11]

Since it appears that the present Job Service system may be subject to change, the question of responsibility for veterans' employment and training programs certainly will arise again. Employment and training scholar Sar Levitan, George Washington University, has made clear his personal preference for a universal welfare system that treats all citizens on an equal basis. However, even he has acknowledged that veterans are indeed a special case:

> "It would be harsh, as well as politically naive, to suggest that veterans' programs should be cut back to levels identical with other welfare programs. But it should not be amiss to suggest that public policy in the future be directed

toward bringing universal welfare programs up to VA standards. Veterans have been the sirens who were able to call forth government support for their needs. The VA, whose design and administration of welfare programs have been exemplary, might become the precursor of and the model for a liberal, humane and respected welfare system for all. A careful review of the VA experience suggests lessons that can be gleaned from the veterans programs which would be useful to help restructure and improve the nation's welfare system."[12]

Recomendations

Since support obviously exists to continue the VJTA program, it would appear to be in the best interest of all concerned to work within a system that has proven to be an effective mechanism for veterans' job training. Accordingly, I would suggest that serious consideration be given to the following proposals:

1. Expand the Veterans Job Training Act to include all recently separated veterans. This action would allow JTPA to target its funding to other populations with urgent needs. Also, by eliminating the income-level test required by JTPA programs, all unemployed, recently separated veterans (10 of the previous 15 weeks) would be assured of a safety net to help them reenter the civilian labor market
2. In the event that JTPA/SDA and Job Service systems are consolidated, as is currently under study, require that all SDAs either must maintain a separate veterans' employment staff that duplicates the functions of the LVER/DVOP Job Service veterans programs, or must contract veterans' employment and training services to a recognized state veterans' agency or national veterans' service organization.
3. Develop legislation that would require that veterans' preference be granted for all programs sponsored by the JTPA and any new job training programs under federal oversight at the state and local service delivery points to ensure that veterans receive a uniform level of service on a nationwide basis.
4. The State Job Training Coordinating Councils, which function under the JTPA legislation, should include within their membership a representative selected from one of the major veterans' service organizations and an ex-officio representative from the VA regional office or offices serving the state.
5. The Department of Labor needs to develop more in-depth statistical information concerning veterans' employment and training activities under JTPA programs. This information should be available in a format that would permit better correlation between the JTPA, Job Service and VA data-reporting systems.

It seems obvious that despite the best efforts of many members of Congress and the national veterans' service organizations, veterans' employment and training programs have not been immune from the same problems that have affected other social welfare programs in the past decade. Paul Egan and Dennis Rhoades have summarized the present situation in their statement to the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, subcommittee on education, training, and employment that, "new legislation will be needed to strengthen and preserve veterans' preference in a viable national labor exchange system, as well as to develop for the first time an employment and training program for veterans, the very existence of which is not completely at the mercy of budgetary exigencies or theories of new federalism or privatization."[13]

Notes

1. Levitan, Sar A. and Cleary, Karen A., **Old Wars Remain Unfinished**, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1973, pp. ix-xi.

2. **Employment and Training Reporter**, July 23, 1986, pp. 1193-1195.

3. Levitan and Cleary, op. cit., p. 123.

4. **The Veterans Economic Guardian**, The American Legion National Economic Commission, February, 1987.

5. **Employment and Training Reporter**, March 25, 1987, p. 726.

6. **Supplementary Report: Evaluation of the Veterans Job Training Program**, Centaur Associates, Inc., Washington, DC, September, 1986. (Courtesy of Dr. Dennis Wyant and Mr. Jim Hogan, VA Headquarters, Washington, DC.)

7. Internal U.S. Department of Labor summary data from Job Training Longitudinal Survey and JTPA Annual Status Report supplied by Greg Knorr, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington DC, March 18, 1987.

8. **Employment and Training Reporter**, July 23, 1986, pp. 1193-1195.

9. Centaur Associates, op. cit.

10. Internal U.S. Department of Labor data, op. cit.

11. **Employment and Training Reporter**, March 25, 1987, pp. 726-728.

12. Levitan and Cleary, op. cit., p. 171

13. **Employment and Training Reporter**, July 23, 1986, pp. 1195.

Cognizant ramblings: superfluous lags the veteran on the stage (vanity of human wishes)

by Larry W. Rivers

American industry has been exposed to a recurring upheaval brought about by the whirlwind of international competition. Correspondingly the labor force has been subjected to varying roles, reorganization, technological advances and economic shifts. Employers seeking to increase their competitiveness and productivity are attempting to reduce expenses by treating their labor force as a variable cost. They are turning increasingly to contingent workers to fulfill industrial strategic needs in a fluid marketplace. No longer can employees, in the flexible labor market, expect to enter into a secure long-term relationship with their employer. Acquisitions, mergers, plant closings, downsizing and displacement are commonplace in today's labor environment.

Larry W. Rivers is immediate past national commander-in-chief, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. A marine corps veteran, Rivers is a partner in the Alexandria, LA, law firm of Rivers & Black.

Workers in the future may experience hardships brought about by loss of health care and pension coverage, thus placing increased demands on our existing social welfare system. Involuntary retirements in response to job loss or lack of acceptable job opportunities for older workers remove them permanently from the labor force. Financial inducements to retire do not always provide economic security nor make up for the absence of Social Security benefits. Liberalization or elimination of the Social Security earning test is a significant economic decision that must be addressed as we look toward the future.

Projections that address the demographic structure of labor supply predict a continuing slowdown in the number of individuals entering the labor force, and the composition of that force is expected to begin to sharply reverse itself in the mid-1990s. Employers confronted with a dwindling pool of labor entrants may be forced to recruit from nontraditional sources such as the disabled and senior citizen community. Worker needs and expectations will influence employer hiring decisions as never before. Labor shortages now are beginning to drive up employer human resource costs in the form of job training and reengineering. It is estimated that employers invest $30 billion for formal training and approximately $180 billion for informal training. Employers are becoming more involved in federally funded programs, such as the Job Training Partnership Act, Work Incentive (now the Job Opportunity and Basic Skills program operated under the Family Support Act of 1988) and Employment Service programs in search of trained employees.

Decade of budget reductions

In order to enhance our competitive position in the international market, American industry will be required to focus increased attention on improved productivity, quality and adaptability which, in turn, will require greater emphasis on human resource development. Simultaneously employers will be required to strengthen their national advisory role by providing their analysis of federal employment policies and programs. They must seek to maximize their return on Federal Unemployment Tax Act investments and influence the utilization and effectiveness of the Employment Service. Employers currently finance the majority of the cost of the national labor exchange, and in light of this investment are entitled to be a major in influence in the direction of the national labor exchange system.

The United States Employment Service, which has had "a proud tradition of quality services," has endured nearly a decade of severe budget reductions. The principle of a national, federal-state employment service system, as envisioned by Senator Robert Wagner in 1928 to eliminate haphazard and competitive job placement, has been lost. Office closures, staff reductions, antiquated automation systems and spasmodic mergers with JTPA programs has led to a siege mentality throughout the USES. Financial constraints have led to a general retreat into urban enclaves abandoning rural workers to fend

for themselves. According to Richard Freeman, president of the Interstate Conference of Employment Security Agencies, "...the level of federal funds has reached the point that many states have been forced to supplement federal funds with state funds in order to operate Unemployment Insurance, Employment Services and Labor Market Information programs." Freeman further added, "Employers, and ultimately the public, are paying twice for Employment Security services..."

Legislators recently pursued a proposal to shore up the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund by increasing the base on which FUTA is levied from each covered employee's first $7,000 to the first $10,000 in wages. The intent is to squirrel away the funds to offset the next recession. In Fiscal Year 1989 the Department of Labor estimates that $930 million more will be collected under FUTA for the administration of Employment Security than will be expended. FUTA revenues for FY 1990 are estimated at $3.6 billion, but only $2.9 billion are requested to administer the Employment Security system. The federal government will collect $960 million more in unemployment taxes than it plans to spend on Employment Security programs.

The general decline in the effectiveness of the USES in fulfilling its mandated responsibilities has occurred simultaneously with the erosion of America's industrial competitive edge. The Employment Service is not routinely accessed by the majority of employers, and it it unable to consistently produce quality workers for positions that provide equitable salaries.

Lack of national employment and training policy

The Congress of the United States has declared its intent for effective employment services to veterans and requires vigorous implementation of policy and programs for veterans by the Secretary of Labor. As of this writing, the intent of Congress has not been translated by the Secretary of Labor into a national veterans' employment and training policy. Special staff have been placed with the USES to deal with the needs of veterans, and specific performance standards have been established. Though the role of the Employment Service is to serve all applicants and employers, priority is given to veterans. There is no point to be gained by lamenting over the degrees or adequacy of services historically provided to veterans by the Employment Service. The debate should focus on proper utilization of existing resources to efficiently perform mandated responsibilities and to access the employer community, promoting veterans as valuable resource.

Currently there are 27.4 million aging veterans, which represents 15 percent of the total population. Our concern is that the continued general dismantling of the Employment Service will compound the delivery of effective assistance, and that the Employment Service will become administratively unresponsive to the needs of veterans.

While on active duty veterans are encouraged to improve their formal education, are exposed to more varied job experiences and have

obtained higher technological skill levels than the average labor force entrant. Though employers need this talent they have not effectively accessed the veterans' community. Earning trajectories of veterans suggest that employers undervalue military training. A majority of employers have indicated that veteran status makes no difference in their hiring decisions. It has been suggested that veterans' earnings drop substantially on discharge as as result of "functional unemployment problems" created by "imperfect information in the labor market and the slowness of the job search process." Veterans must not be condemned to low-pay, low-skill positions as a result of misinformation or procrastination.

In general the vast majority of veterans are successful, productive members of society and are better educated than the general public. There are subgroups of veterans who have greater need for employment and training support. Older veterans dislocated as a result of technological advances and plant closures, combat veterans, disabled, minorities and homeless veterans continue to endure disproportionately high rates of unemployment. Their ability to reintegrate into society is indisputably affiliated with the fate of the Employment Service.

The General Accounting Office in a November, 1988, transition series publication entitled, "Department of Labor Issues," stated, "...that it may now be time for increased federal leadership in making decisions on whom to serve, what mix and intensity of services to provide, and how to deal with potential program abuses." We in the veterans' community recognize that there is a continuing need for a national public labor exchange that functions within broad federal guidelines and is held accountable for the delivery of services tailored to the geographic needs of the local labor market. A coordinated, efficient national public labor exchange is essential to the economic well being of the nation.

ES funding is insufficient

Recognizing that current funding for the state Employment Security agencies is insufficient to ensure that veterans' services are adequately administered, a consensus was reached by major veterans' service organizations that recommended Wagner-Peyser funding levels be increased significantly, and that 10 percent of the appropriated funds be set aside for veteran incentive grants for states having measurably demonstrated aggressiveness in implementing veterans' employment and training programs. It is essential that the crisis in the Employment Service be addressed through utilization of the Federal Unemployment Tax Act funds for their intended purposes. FUTA funds must be removed from the Federal Unified Budget and corrective measures through targeted funding must begin now to ensure preservation of the Employment Service. If adequately funded, professionally staffed and provided the necessary automation and assessment tools, the Employment Service will be effective in fulfilling labor market demands now and in the future.

The Employment Service cannot be "all things to all people." In order to be effective it cannot be immersed in social-welfare programs. The Employment Service activities must be streamlined to return it to its primary role of being a labor exchange resource center, which provides job information, job development, assessment, counseling and job referral. Local offices must maintain a continuous liaison with local training activities, employers and vocational rehabilitation programs. America's veterans must have access to vocational training and retraining. The training issue is a subject of debate for a separate forum. Job preparedness training activities are affiliated with the role of the Employment Service but are clearly a separate activity. If functions are defined, and consistent and adequate funds are provided, the SESAs can direct their attention to the mission of cost effectively matching worker skills with employer needs and reducing structural unemployment by returning unemployed workers to productive jobs.

The Department of Labor has a distinct responsibility to assume a leadership role in enforcing veterans' preference in all employment and training programs funded by the department. Though several states are integrating their SESA into the overall state work force development system, by and large, the Employment Service is viewed as a federal responsibility as are services to veterans. The responsibility for ensuring compliance with veterans' preference mandates must be shared throughout all levels of the Employment Service by the professionals operating the program.

In the words of John Adams, "All great changes are irksome to the human mind, especially those which are attended with great dangers and uncertain effects." The soothsayers have predicted a future characterized by tumultuous change with a corresponding shift in the responsibilities of the Employment Service. The evolution of the Employment Service for more than 50 years has been characterized by adaptation to the nation's socio-economic needs. The constant in this process has been that the Employment Service has continued to principally provide a no-fee, single employment resource for job seekers and employers with priority of service to veterans. This partnership is not subject to debate and will continue into the future. Changes within the Employment Service will occur, but not at the expense of America's veterans.

Women veterans... toward the year 2000 and beyond

by Diana D. Danis

"Women have a right to all the perks available to soldiers in general. The discrimination faced by women veterans seeking their benefits or access to veterans' programs is similar to the discrimination faced by minorities."

-Oleta Crain, Region VIII Women's Bureau administrator, WWII veteran

"When my enlistment expired, I had no counseling in regards to my VA benefits. Until recently, I did not realize that job counseling and placement was available."

-A woman veteran from South Lake Tahoe, CA

"They (a Job Service interviewer) asked me whose wife or dependent I was and when I told them I was the veteran and, in fact, a disabled veteran, the interviewer said, 'you don't look disabled'."

-Elizabeth Carr, Vietnam-era, legally blind veteran from New York

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Diana D. Danis is a course manager/instructor with the National Veterans Training Institute, Denver, CO, and chair/director of the National Women Veterans' Training Conference.

"I was a crew chief for aircraft mechanics, and when I got out there seemed to be no way to transfer my military training into the civilian labor market."

-Maria Alvarado, Vietnam-era veteran, American GI Forum, San Antonio, TX

Women served alongside their fathers, husbands, sisters, brothers and children during the American Revolution; were disguised as men during the Civil War; and served as auxiliary forces during World War I. Since World War II they have served in uniform with men, and today are trained and work in nearly every military occupational category, representing approximately 12 percent of active duty personnel. While the male veteran population is decreasing rapidly as deaths surpass new entrants, the female veteran population is expanding rapidly.

There are more than 1.2 million women veterans; yet, according to the Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Service less than 10 percent have applied for employment and training assistance.

In light of the Hudson Institute's Workforce 2000 findings, this is not encouraging news. With projections that women, minorities and immigrants will account for 80 percent of the net additions to the labor force between now and the year 2000 (and recognizing that women represent a large percentage of both minority and immigrant populations), we must use all the tools at our disposal to find, train, retrain and place women veterans in gainful, full-time positions.

The learning curve

While working as a veterans' employment counselor I was struck by the small number of women veterans seeking assistance. Naivety led me to several assumptions -- all of which over time proved to be false. Perhaps, I thought, these women don't seek services because they have their lives under control. Most of the women I met during the decade I spent on active duty and in the Army reserves were strong-willed survivors. Anyway, (second assumption) not that many of us served in the military so I shouldn't really expect to run across a lot of women veterans. There was always the old standby -- they were homemakers or retired.

I was doing a pretty good job maintaining the status quo without ever realizing the error of my ways. Then it happened -- "Reality Orientation." I read an article written by a Vietnam, U.S. Army nurse veteran who clearly was angry about how women veterans were being dealt with by the service-provider system. She wrote that women veterans were treated as though they and their needs were invisible. She recalled going to a Veterans Administration medical facility and being asked whose dependent she was, and on clarifying her status as a veteran in her own right in need of medical services, was told they couldn't do anything for her because they had no facilities for women veterans. Her anger mounted. She went to a vet center to find out about readjustment counseling and was told she couldn't participate in

the "real" Vietnam veterans' support group but was more than welcome to join the wife's support group. She became incensed. When her World War II vintage uncle told her, "girls can't be veterans, and she wasn't in combat anyhow," the faces of scores of wounded youth she cared for and comforted in Vietnam flashed before her eyes. She became enraged. Her hurt and fury exploded on the written page.

For a long time I was frustrated and angry, too -- with myself for my years of ignorance, with a system that didn't seem to care, with the lack of information about women veterans and with other women veterans who didn't want to get involved with a fight for equitable treatment because they felt it was a losing battle.

Over time I've learned to temper both my frustration and anger, to understand by looking at the larger picture of social, legal, economic, political and historical perspectives that created the problems, and to seek viable solutions toward addressing the needs of women veterans in concert with other concerned men and women nationwide.

The identification crisis

Many, many women who served in the military do not either know they are veterans or take great care to mask their identity. It may seem absurd but the perspective of the general public is that a veteran is someone who fought in a war. That message has been relayed to untold numbers of women veterans. But why would those who know they are veterans consciously decide to hide their status? Often it is to escape the social stigmas associated with women who join the military. For those who served during Vietnam it also could be related to the public disdain for those in uniform during a very difficult period in our nation's history. Like the Vietnam veterans who came home from an unpopular war labeled as baby killers, drug addicts, alcoholics and losers; women veterans, to this day, frequently are labeled as husband hunters, whores, prostitutes, lesbians, or too dumb, plain or stupid to make it in the "real world."

To compound the problem, women are seldom asked if they are a veteran when seeking assistance through Job Service, precluding them from the specialized services provided by Disabled Veteran Outreach Program specialists and Local Veteran Employment Representatives. Further, those who are asked and who don't recognize themselves as veterans reply in the negative and do not take advantage of the programs and services available to them.

Transferability of skills

Tremendous strides have been made over the past 20 years to integrate women into almost every military occupational field. Unfortunately, little progress has been made toward converting non-traditional skills acquired in the military into comparable civilian jobs. Examples cited in the November, 1987, Forum on Women Veterans' Employment Issues: Preparing for the Year 2000 Conference report are, "the highly skilled combat engineer or tank

repairperson who may find themselves underemployed or unemployed as civilians."

The American Veterans Committee in 1985 studied women veterans using the Employment Service. Their results brought to light that in most instances the women's military experience did not have a positive impact on employment in the civilian sector, which was reflected in lower wages and an apparent preference by women veterans to secure traditional employment (i.e., secretarial and service industries) regardless of their military training. It is speculated that part of the problem may be the large number of younger women veterans who are single parents and are willing to take any job as soon as possible in order to support their families.

Minority women veterans

According to the Women's Equity Action League, the percentage of Black enlisted women in the Armed Forces is 2.5 times higher than their percentage in the national population, and 30.5 percent of all enlisted women in the armed services are Black. Hispanic, American Indian and Asiatic women represent a minuscule percentage of the Armed Forces.

For many minority as well as Anglo women, military service was their first viable employment, and they are not equipped to translate their military skills into civilian terminology. They are very unsure of themselves, which casts them as not job ready, and very few providers in the country feel capable of addressing their needs.

The information gap

There are more unknowns than knowns about women veterans. What is the time frame between exiting the military and securing gainful employment? How do women veterans approach the job search? What are their actual numbers? How many are in the work force?

Women first were asked about military service in the 1980 census, but the data is believed unreliable due, once again, to the problem of identifying themselves as veterans. Additionally it has only been in the past couple of years that women veterans began to be included in studies of veterans.

For employment and training purposes there are several groups for which substantial data is in critical need: Korea and post-Korea veterans, Vietnam-era veterans, post-Vietnam-era veterans and those scheduled to be discharged from active service.

Some possible solutions: identification and outreach

Reaching women who do not realize they are veterans can be remedied by adjusting the questions asked. For example, "Have you ever served on active duty in the military?" versus "Are you a veteran?" To reach those unwilling to identify themselves as veterans

requires greater effort. One option is to place a sign in a strategic location in a Job Service office that asks: "If you've ever served on active duty in the military, please inform the interviewer. All information is confidential and only will be used to secure resources and benefits on your behalf."

Because finding women veterans using traditional channels may prove futile, try Public Service Announcements in newspapers and on radio and television specifically targeting women who served in the military. Encourage local media to run success stories about women veterans you've served, which also will enhance the image of Job Service and bring more women veterans into your offices.

Place posters in public assistance program offices, grocery stores, laundries and dry cleaners, food banks, women's bookstores, women's shelters and crisis centers, the YWCA and on college campuses. In other words, seek out and saturate those places frequented by large numbers of women. Encourage veterans' organizations, community agencies, etc. to combine their mailing lists of women veterans and implement a direct-mail campaign using the skills of volunteers. Don't forget to include organizations established for or working predominantly with minority groups in order to better serve the large percentage of minority women veterans.

Skill Transfer

Talk to your Women's Bureau representative about conducting workshops on transferability of skills from the military to the civilian work world and non-traditional fields of endeavor. Research your labor market for specific information about non-traditional jobs and provide that information to your women veteran applicants. Work with your local unions and trade associations and encourage them to provide on-the-job opportunities for women veterans.

Find out about successful women veterans in your community, including those working in non-traditional areas, and ask them to serve as role models for women veterans you are serving. Don't overlook the value of successful women veteran entrepreneurs as potential employers or mentors. OJT programs can pave the way for the future, especially for those women veterans who have been out of the work force a number of years as well as for younger women leaving service who have little or no other previous work experience. A far greater percentage of women veterans have become entrepreneurs than their male counterparts. Use your Small Business Administration women's programs and training workshops to help launch your women veterans in their own businesses.

Finally recognize that many skills acquired in the military may not be marketable in civilian employment because the fields are exclusive to the military environment.

Information

Find out as much as you can about women veterans in your community. Create and administer your own survey or contact the

National Women Veterans' Training Conference, P.O. Box 12621, Denver, CO, 80212 and request copies of the National Women Veterans' Survey and Resource Guide Questionnaire (this is an on-going, long-term study) to give to your women veterans for completion. Encourage your women veterans to participate in studies, forums and conferences for women veterans.

Create a women veterans' support group that meets weekly. Make sure there is some structure to assure continuity and group stability and prepare objective pre and post tests to measure the success of the group.

If you are operating or plan to operate funded training programs, seriously consider a cooperative agreement with the Department of Defense for administration of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery for aptitude measurement. This approach was used by Washington state in its Women Veterans Project in conjunction with interest inventories and assessment of barriers. It found that participants were very receptive to the ASVAB as they were familiar with it and it reduced their fear of test taking.

Women veterans often have different support services than their male counterparts, for example, personal hygiene items such as kotex, make-up, curling irons and professional dress needs including nylons and nail polish. Generally your female veterans will not ask for this type of assistance. To ease the discomfort on your part and theirs, consider developing support service and hygiene needs check-lists for both men and women and extending your resource network so you are able to accommodate your veterans' needs. Have your veterans check off their needs and assure them you will do everything possible to meet their requests.

If you haven't done so already, research local women's organizations and find one that offers image building and professional appearance seminars for women and refer your female veterans to them.

Work with your state National Women Veterans' Training Conference coordinator and Veterans' Administration women veterans coordinator to help create a statewide resource and referral library to better serve your women veterans and to provide material about successful programs in your state to the Resource Center of the National Veterans' Training Institute for nationwide exposure and access.

Conclusion

While this material has concentrated on employment and training issues facing women veterans, many other issues such as VA benefits, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Agent Orange exposure, homelessness, substance abuse/addiction, education, transportation, childcare and aging are critical problems of deep concern to women veterans. It would be foolhardy to suggest they do not present major barriers to employment and training efforts.

The National Women Veterans' Training Conference, held annually the third week of October in Denver, CO, concentrates on

networking, training, problem identification and solutions, including all of the areas of concern mentioned in this paper.

The information listing at the end of this article provides resources regarding women veterans that are available to you to aid in better understanding women veterans, their issues, concerns and recommendations to address them.

Resources

National Women Veteran's Training Conference (NWVC)
P.O. Box 12621
Denver, CO, 80212
(303) 433-2119

National Veterans' Training Institute
Resource & Technical Assistance Center
1250 14th Street, Suite 640
Denver, CO, 80202
1-800-346-8139

U.S. Department of Labor
Mr. Jim Rude
JTPA Title IV-C Women Veterans Projects
Room 1315S, Francis Perkins Building
200 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC, 20210
(202) 523-9116

VA Advisory Committee on Women Veterans
c/o Barbara Brandau
Program Assistant (10B/WV)
DVA Central Office
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC, 20420
(202) 233-2621/2631

Women's Bureau National Office
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Ave., NW
Room S3002
Washington, DC, 20210
(202) 523-6611

William Joiner Center on War & Social Consequences
University of Massachusetts at Boston
Women Veterans' Project
McCormack Hall
2nd Floor, Room 513
Harbor Campus
Boston, MA, 02125
(617) 929-7133/7864

Alliance of Women Veterans
P.O. Box 48817
Los Angles, CA, 90048

Women's Equity Action League (WEAL)
1250 I (Eye) Street, NW
Washington, DC, 20005

Vietnam Veterans of America
Special Committee on Women Veterans
Cheryl Nicol, Chair
2001 S. Street, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC, 20009-1125
(202) 332-2700

Reports

JULY, 1988, Report of the VA Advisory Committee on Women Veterans
(VA, Barbara Brandau above)

Considerations in Training Women Veterans
Washington State Employment Security Department
(Jim Rude, USDOL above)

Conference Report: Forum on Women Veterans; Employment Issues
Preparing for the Year 2000
(Women's Bureau, above)

History and National Action Agenda for Women Veterans and **Networker** *publication*
(National Women Veterans' Conference, above)

Civilian Occupational Labor Market Information System: a project to help veterans

by Gary Crossley

The Civilian Occupational Labor Market Information System is a project sponsored and funded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service. The purpose of the system is to assist military personnel understand state/local civilian labor market conditions as part of their career planning process.

This project represents a unique collaborative effort of a number of federal and state government agencies along with national organizations. Project coordination has been led by the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee, with support from the Interstate Conference of Employment Security Agencies. Data assistance is being provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the state Employment Security agencies. The Nevada and Utah Departments of Employment Security have shared the role of database assemblers. The Iowa State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee is responsible for the design and programming of the system software.

Gary Crossely is the Labor Market Information program associate on the staff of the Interstate Conference of Employment Sercuity Agencies, Inc., Washington DC.

Project Description

What is COLMIS and what role will it have in assisting veterans in making labor market decisions? The COLMIS data base consists of annual state and local labor market and occupational information produced by state Employment Security agencies. The items in the data base include: total unemployment rate; industry employment and wage trends; Employment Service applicants, openings, and job order wages by occupational grouping; and occupational projections and growth rates.

Information on location of Employment Service local offices and **Military Occupation Specialty** to **Dictionary of Occupational Titles** conversion also is contained in COLMIS.

The COLMIS system can have a vital role is assisting veterans in making career and relocation decisions by providing consistent and comparable data for job and geographic judgments. This system is not intended to be the sole factor for career decision-making, but a screening tool for narrowing a veteran's choices. After using COLMIS, veterans may discuss their options with a job counselor or contact the local area(s) directly for more information (updated data on the job market, cost of living comparisons, etc.).

Status of COLMIS

During 1988 Fort Bragg Army Base in Fayettevilee, NC, used a file of SESA Labor Market Information publications from almost every state to assist in an Army transition management project. This cumbersome and nonstandard method of accessing state/local LMI led to the genesis of COLMIS.

In 1989 the COLMIS software was pilot tested at Fort Bragg as part of a special U.S. Army transition management process. The system was used to assist Army personnel six-nine months prior to expiration of their term of enlistment.

The COLMIS software is designed to operate on IBM PC-compatible microcomputers and allows for both individualized interactive access and processing large numbers of requests simultaneously. The interactive option allows for the selection of individual reports and alternative geographic requests. The present COLMIS menu system and data base requires about 40 megabytes of computer storage.

In regard to the future aspect of COLMIS, updates of the data base are in the initial phase and should be completed by early 1990. The 1990 COLMIS activities also will focus on system enhancement as well as implementation of the system in seven sites.

System enhancement during the next year will consist of: adding officer occupations to the system; adding Air Force, Navy and Marine occupations; adding city name geographic options; reviewing possible new data topics, such as Federal Civil Service Occupations, DOT occupational characteristics or metropolitan area housing costs; and developing a full-screen interactive version of COLMIS.

As part of the seven-site installation in early 1990 COLMIS user training will be delivered. The revised system also will be monitored and evaluated for effectiveness during 1990.

COLMIS Report Content

An example of the COLMIS report output is shown in the appendix. Six tables of information are produced on five report pages. The first step in utilizing COLMIS is for the individual's personal information to be entered -- first and last names, **MOS**, and the state/county of area interested in reviewing labor market data.

- Table 1 -- The first report page, which presents the individual's personal information and the first table, provides information on where the local Employment Service office is located for the geographic area selected. This local office address and telephone number can be used to obtain additional LMI and special assistance for job search (advance resumes, etc.). This local office directory used for this table was supplied by the Employment Security Systems Institute. If there are multiple local offices serving a county, the office presented is the one with the highest number of applications.

This table also provides the soldier with the equivalent civilian occupation for the specified **MOS**. The occupations most closely related to the **MOS** skill level and other related occupations are listed. Occupations are grouped (separated by a blank line) by skill level. The asterisked (*) civilian occupations are those most appropriate for the individual's current skill level. Other levels are clustered above and below these. Those listed above the asterisked occupations require a lesser skill level while those listed below require a greater skill level.

The **DOT** code column pertains to the **Dictionary of Occupational Titles** coding system and can be used by Employment Service staff to match the individual's skill with job order/employer needs.

- Table 2 -- This table links the **MOS** with another civilian occupational classification system for which the occupational projected data are available -- Occupational Employment Statistics. The purpose of Table 2 is to describe the outlook for related civilian occupations.

The source of this data series is the SESA LMI departments. Currently, limitations on SESA-LMI funding hampers the development of these data, particularly at the local level. The initial version of COLMIS contains 35 statewide projected areas, 78 metropolitan statistical areas, 200 planning areas and more than 1,800 counties.

This table is probably the most important in terms of providing labor market data for the individual's skill level and the long-term outlook for an occupation. Of course, an individual's chance of getting a particular job is dependent on many other factors, not just having a certain occupation.

- Table 3 -- The total unemployment rate for the county selected is shown in Table 3 and compared to data for the U.S. and the selected state. The most recent two average unemployment rates are displayed

for each area. The total unemployment rate is one barometer of how well the economy for the selected area is doing. The source of this data series is the SESA Local Area Unemployment Statistics federal-state cooperative program operated in conjunction with the Bureau of Labor Statists. Data are available for all states, counties, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

- Table 4 -- Table 4 provides detailed information on the most recent annual average employment and average weekly wage for the selected state and county. The percent change from the previous year also is displayed for the employment by industry totals. The data are shown by major industry categories and give the individual an idea of the types of major industries in the area and annual trends.

The SESA's Covered Employment and Wages program, another BLS cooperative initiative, provides these numbers for all states and areas.

- Table 5 -- The Employment Service applicants and opening data given in Table 5 provide occupational groupings of individuals registered and job openings (along with their wages) listed by employers in ES office(s) serving the selected county. In some cases, several local ES offices could serve a county or a local office could serve multiple counties. Situations like this are noted with an asterisk.

The occupations are the major groupings of the **DOT**. The first two digits of the **DOT** shown for the individual in Table 1 can be compared to the corresponding **DOT** in Table 5 for a very rough indicator of job supply and demand. Even though the data shown do not represent all applicants and opening for the area, the information can be useful as a proxy in labor market areas.

These data have been collected specially for this project from SESAs, which have been most cooperative in providing the data in various formats. Forty-one states submitted 1988 data by local office, seven states sent county data and two SESAs were able to submit only statewide tables.

- Table 6 -- The final table provides statistics on the employment levels and projected average annual percent growth for groupings of occupations for the geographic area that includes the selected county. The employment levels for each occupational grouping give a picture of the size of the skilled work force employed in that particular occupation.

This table has the same data source as Table 2 and was collected from the SESAs. Like Table 2, data are not available by the same level of geography for each state. If county data are not available, the available area is designated above the data with a listing of inclusive counties shown at the bottom of the table.

It is realized that the individuals receiving these tables will not be labor market analysts and will need instructions on how best to use these data. One-page descriptions for each table are being developed to assist in the interpretation of each piece of information.

Future Possibilities

Several SESAs have already requested copies of the data base and the software for use within their own state's employment and training system. COLMIS has potential applications beyond that of just veterans.

The COLMIS data base could be used both by employers as a tool to locate potential labor supply in various locales or by job seekers looking for work beyond intrastate boundaries.

The COLMIS project has been a unique collaboration of efforts at the national and state levels to build a very unique labor market data base. Now that the data base has been built and pilot sites under testing, the future success will depend on the effective demonstration and use of COLMIS as a career advisor.

COLMIS Table 1

COLMIS Labor Market Report for
Mahoning County Ohio
Soldiers Name: John Smith
Report Date: 05/17/89

For futher employment information in your area, contact your local Employment Service office at:

2026 South Ave.
Youngstown, Ohio 44501
Phone: 216/744-5201

TABLE 1
Equivalent Civilian Occupations for
MOS 64C3 Motor Transport Operator

DOT CODE	DOT TITLE
904383010	Tractor-Trailor-Truck Driver
905663014	Truck Driver, Heavy
906683022	Truck Driver, Light
903683018	Tank-Truck Driver
*909137010	Driver Supervisor
*249167014	Dispatcher, Motor Vehicle

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COLMIS Table 2

COLMIS Labor Market Report
Mahoning County Ohio
Soldiers Name: John Smith

TABLE 2
Equivalent Civilian Occupations Outlook for
MOS 64C3 Motor Transport Operator

Occupational title	1986 Employment	1986-1995 Avg. Ann. Growth(%)
*Dispatchers: EXC. Pol., Fire, Amb.	240	4.2
*First Line Super.: Transport.	230	-8.7

*Occupation Related to the MOS Skill Level

*MSA Area Data Include the Following Counties:
Mahoning Trumbull

COLMIS Table 3

COLMIS Labor Market Report
Soldiers Name: John Smith
Report Date: 05/17/89

TABLE 3
Total Unemployment Rate

U.S.		State: Ohio		County: Mahoning	
1987	1986	1987	1986	1987	1986
6.2%	7.0%	7.0%	8.1%	9.3%	10.0%

COLMIS Table 4

TABLE 4
Employment by Industry and
Average Weekly Wage Data

State: Ohio				County: Mahoning			
	Employment				Employment		
Industry	1987	Percent Change From 1986	Avg. Wkly. Wage 1987	1987	Percent Change From 1986	Avg. Wkly. Wage 1987
Mining	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0
Construction	176073	9.4	444	4981	8.3	470
Manuf.	1097372	-1.1	543	14629	-5.7	454
Transp., Com. & Util.	193440	3.4	507	3730	0.1	465
Trade	1096732	3.0	268	27391	1.0	232
Fin., Ins. & Real Est.	234263	3.8	418	5390	3.3	327
Services	985134	5.8	332	26482	4.9	320
Government	630709	1.6	406	3140	2.6	382
TOTAL	**4465014**	**2.6**	**396**	**96564**	**1.6**	**338**

COLMIS Labor Market Report

Soldiers Name: John Smith
State: Ohio

TABLE 5
Applicants and Openings

Mahoning County Ohio

Avg. **2-Digit DOT	Occupational Groupings	Applicant 1988	Openings 1988	Weekly Wage
00-19	Prof, Tech, & Manager	1,537	238	$268
20-24	Clerical	3,129	1,002	$168
25-29	Sales	675	332	$172
30	Domestic	138	245	$360
31-38	Other Services	2,732	1,036	$136
40-46	Farming, Fishing & Forestry	99	58	$192
50-59	Processing	694	214	$273
60-69	Machine Trades	1,496	242	$244
70-79	Bench Work	749	119	$212
80-89	Structural	1,984	534	$232
90-91	Motor Freight & Transport	886	140	$193
92	Packaging & Materaial Handling	1,581	570	$171
93-97	Other	70	13	$371

**Refer to the first two digits of the DOT code from Table 1.

COLMIS Labor Market Report for
Mahoning County Ohio
Soldiers Name: John Smith
Report Date: 05/17/89
TABLE 6
Occupational Projections

Area Youngstown-Warren, OH MSA MSA

Occupation Grouping	1986 Employment	1986-1995 Avg. Annual Growth (%)
Helpers, Labors and Material Movers	7700	-1.3
Trans and Material Moving Machine and Vehicle Operators	9970	1.9
Plant and System Occupations	440	0.0
Assemblers and Other Handworking Occupations	9940	-8.7
Machine Setter, Set-up Operators, Operators and Tenders	5170	-14.9
Precision Production Occupations	15720	-7.3
Construction Trades, Extractive	4090	0.0
Machinery and Related Mechanics, Installers and Repairers	8860	0.3
Personal Service Occupations	1020	8.8
Cleaning and Building Occupations, Except Private Household	5270	11.8
Health Service Occupations	3800	36.6
Food Preparation and Service Occupations	14060	13.4
Protective Support Occupations, Including Clerical	2940	12.6
Administrative Support Occupations, Including Clerical	29750	4.7
Marketing and Sales Occupations	930	11.8
Writers, Artists and Entertainers	1271	7.9
Health Diagnosing and Treating Occupations	9440	28.0
Teachers, Librarians and Counselors	10310	5.6
Natural, Computer and Mathematical Scientists	450	6.7
Engineers, Architects and Surveyors	3850	6.8
Managerial and Management Related Occupations	12340	10.0
TOTAL, ALL OCCUPATIONS	**188200**	**6.8**

This Area Contains the Following Counties: Mahoning and Trumbull

NVTI -- three years from ground zero

by Priscilla Donovan

When the National Veterans Training Institute was founded in the Fall, 1986, "caring enough to make a difference" was chosen as its motto and statement of purpose.

It begin with a Professional Skills Development course designed to provide Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program specialists with a consistent standard nationwide for serving unemployed veterans. This design was meant to do more than just find jobs for veterans. It supported then-Secretary of Labor William Brock's directive to serve the "whole person." In other words, DVOPs and LVERs were to help veterans with anything that might be a barrier to employment whether it required psychological counseling, housing, retraining or interviewing skills.

At the time, these two concepts might have seemed unrealistic to many. After all, the expectation was that 3,300 low-wage bureaucrats would somehow be inspired to provide sophisticated employment services to a bunch of dislocated, troubled veterans in an economy that was overwhelmed by the information age and global competition. But the most improbable goal of all was that everybody involved would really care about what they were doing and that this would somehow help the "whole person."

Surprisingly, that is just what happened. The participants who came to NVTI that first year often were discouraged, burned out, and fed up. But they sincerely cared about veterans, and they were open to

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Priscilla Donovan is a course manager/trainer at the National Veterans Training Institute, Denver, CO, and coauthor of **Whole-Brain Thinking** *(Morrow, 1984) and* **The Flexibility Factor** *(Doubleday, 1989).*

anything that would help. Going through the core curriculum gave them hope. After all, the mere existence of NVTI was proof that someone in Washington cared about the services being given to veterans. Once these DVOPs and LVERs found that they weren't alone in their commitment, a powerful force was unleashed. They took heart and began to network their ideas and motivate each other. The entire process of helping veterans gained momentum.

First year

By the end of the first full year of operation, Vietnam veteran unemployment declined from 4.7 to 4.0 percent. Also, an additional 120,000 veterans were placed by Employment Services boosting the total number of veterans served to 575,000. Of those, more than 201,000 were Vietnam veterans.

The participants learned from each other and from NVTI trainers. And they taught: their evaluations were used to refine the core class; their narratives and conversations told NVTI planners which areas to cover in specialized advanced courses; repeatedly they asked for a National Resources Center that would continue the networking process.

The participants' commitment to veterans inspired the small NVTI staff members who worked long hours to train approximately 300 people a month, to publish a newsletter; to develop materials, reports and pamphlets; and to implement Department of Labor conferences.

That first year 2,600 DVOPs and LVERs attended along with several hundred local office managers. The latter were interested enough in veterans to risk being a minority among those who sometimes were openly antagonistic toward LOMs. These managers learned about the problems DVOPs and LVERs face day in and day out and went home determined to change things in their own offices. Moreover, they talked to other office managers and heightened general office awareness of the needs of veterans. A level of caring and competence developed throughout many offices that never had existed before. To date, five office managers have won the Dean K. Phillips Award, an honor bestowed by class vote to the group's most valuable participant.

Second year

By the second year NVTI had on board new trainers, course developers and technicians to help design and implement specialized curriculum and produce teaching tools all while continuing to train participants in the core curriculum at the rate of 400 per month.

Two new classes are Veterans' Benefits (already successfully piloted) and Vocational Guidance Services, a two-week course that combines Case Management, Interviewing Skills, Placement Skills and Client Assessment. Other specialized courses are under design on such topics as Labor Management Information and Job Search Skills.

Several programs are designed for groups that interface with DVOPs and LVERs. These include: Veterans Reemployment Rights for Veterans Employment and Training Services staff, Grants Management for Disabled Veterans Employment and Training Services, Veterans Information and Management System training for VETS staff, and Professional Skills Development, a management seminar for Employment Services administrators, directors, field supervisors and state office staff. Being developed jointly with VETS is a training program for senior VETS staff. Each of these requires extensive research and development of a manual and appropriate teaching tools.

That second year NVTI also officially opened a Resource and Technical Assistance Center where information and assistance for DVOPs and LVERs is stored and dispensed. It has become the central nervous system of NVTI because it keeps all participants connected to the center and each other. Its 800 number (451-5759) rings 10 hours a day (7 a.m. 6 p.m. Denver time) with requests for materials stored there, for technical assistance, for the latest information on DOL happenings and sometimes just for a friendly word of encouragement.

The technical assistance program currently works as a clearinghouse for information on specific subjects such as grant writing, computers and ex-offender programs. The center identifies experts on a given topic and puts them in touch with anyone who expresses a need in their field. Under consideration by VETS is an expansion and refinement of this process that would provide financial support to this dynamic method of networking.

This year and beyond

During the first six months of this year NVTI trained more than twice as many participants as the first six months of 1988. In fact, more participants were trained in the core curriculum during this time than were trained in the core circulum during all of 1988. Speciality courses have had 262 veterans' service professionals attend from January-June, 1989.

NVTI is a rare entity in that it was established by an act of Congress (PL 100-323) in much the same way that DVOP and LVER positions were legally formalized. Further, NVTI's standing means that the continued professional development of LVERs and DVOPS is assured. While NVTI's existence is secure, it is not mandated to stay in its present location at the University of Colorado at Denver. An RFP (request for proposal) was issued in July, 1989, inviting open bidding by other institutions to be the hosts of the training center. The new grant will be awarded for a three-year contract.

NVTI was established originally through the efforts of veterans advocacy groups, officials at DOL and sympathetic individuals in the Senate and House. Their support gathered strength from the general public. Americans once again cared about their veterans. The concept picked up momentum as more nonvet groups pitched in and joined the network. A recent review by the University of Colorado reveals the extent of these linkages. More than 50 government agencies,

institutions, corporations and non-profit organizations are assisting NVTI in four categories:

- providing training materials, equipment and brochures
- contributing staff time and technical assistance
- assisting with program development
- participating in course instruction and presentations.

Most have contributed in three out of four of those areas and some in all four. They include numerous veteran organization, government and military agencies and such private organizations as the Salvation Army, television Station KCNC Denver, the International Association of Personnel in Employment Security, the Interstate Conference of Employment Security Agencies, the American Red Cross and Coors.

The demographics of the core course groups have changed in recent months partly because most DVOPS and LVERs have completed the course. Many more local office managers of Employment Services are attending as well as counselors and interviewers from ES. Also enrolled are individuals from previously unrepresented groups, such as Veterans Administration psychologists and rehab counselors, seven of whom have been Dean K. Phillip Award winners since February of this year.

Many feared that a shift in class composition might mean a shift away from a warm and caring group rapport to a less intense commitment to veterans. To the contrary, recent groups have been just as enthusiastic about improving services to veterans. In fact, the new ideas these related services bring to the table provide innovative ideas and improved linkages with other agencies and have broadened the networking that is so important to veteran services. More and more people "care enough to make a difference."

Part II: local office perspective

The employment characteristics of the disabled Vietnam-era veterans in Idaho

by Robert Michael Wilson

The following paper consists of excerpts from the thesis of Robert Michael Wilson for a Master of Public Administration from the University of Idaho in 1985. Space limitation prevent publication of numerous statistics, tables, etc.

Advanced medical technology and evacuation techniques contributed to saving the lives of thousands of wounded military personnel during the Vietnam conflict. Many of those veterans who became ill or were injured in the line of duty are receiving service-connected compensation. The Administrator of Veterans' Affairs Annual Report (1982) produced by the Veterans Administration reported 579,457 Vietnam-era veterans were receiving service-connected compensation for injuries that occurred while they were in the military. Those disabled veterans who were injured during the Vietnam conflict make up 25.5 percent of the 2.2 million American veterans the VA has classified as disabled.

Robert Michael Wilson is the state director for Idaho for the U.S. Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Service.

The amount of compensation a veteran receives from the VA depends on how the veteran's disability affected his ability to perform normal daily activity and his ability to work in the civilian labor force.

The federal government has passed legislation to provide assistance to the disabled veterans for rehabilitation, employment training, employment preference and employment assistance. With all the federal programs available to aid the veterans' return into society, very little data is available to evaluate their current employment characteristics.

Current and past literature dealing with the Vietnam-era veterans has raised questions about the current social status of the disabled Vietnam-era veterans. Some literature suggests that the disabled Vietnam-era veterans are encountering social readjustment problems. Unfortunately the research was based on a limited population of disabled Vietnam-era veterans and was not designed to target this specific group.

A review of aggregate data collected by the Department of Labor and the Bureau of the Census provides limited or no information on the employment characteristics of disabled Vietnam-era veterans. The statistical information available from government agencies on unemployment rates, educational achievement and occupational and economic status of veterans does not distinguish between those veterans who are receiving service-connected compensation and those veterans who are not receiving such compensation.

Without an understanding of the current status of the disabled Vietnam-era veterans, it is difficult to determine whether the programs designed to provide employment and education assistance are providing adequate service to their target group.

Descriptive research methods

A descriptive research method was chosen for this study to describe the social characteristics of the disabled Vietnam-era veteran in Idaho. The facts described in this study include demographic and other descriptive characteristics about each subject including: 1) age; 2) area of residence; 3) disability status by: a) type and b) percentage awarded by the VA; 4) education attainment; 5) occupation by occupational group; 6) class of worker (type of employer); 7) income in 1984 by: a) veterans and b) all family members living in home; and 8) unemployment: a) by duration of unemployment during 1984 and b) and by reason for unemployment.

The possible resources for names of disabled Vietnam-era veterans to perform a reliable study included: 1) those subjects who were seeking work through the Idaho Department of Employment, 2) statewide veteran organizations, and 3) the Veterans Administration Regional Office in Boise, ID.

Dillman's (1978) **Total Design Method** was used to develop the mailing of the survey. The users of his method have had a response rate of 60-82 percent. In hope of a 75-percent response rate, 511 randomly selected disabled Vietnam-era veterans were mailed questionnaires.

Before selecting the sample subjects, one additional step was used to assure a representative cross section of the total population. The 1,921 subjects were stratified into groups according to the percent of service-connected disability rating they were receiving from the Veterans Administration. By stratifying the total subject population before the selection of the surveyed population, the potential variable of disability rating was limited.

The subjects surveyed were selected by use of a table of random numbers for each percentage level of service-connected compensation.

Class of Worker

At the end of the Vietnam conflict in 1974 nearly 30 percent of the Idaho disabled Vietnam-era veterans were still on active duty. By 1979 the percent of active duty personnel had declined to 10.74 percent and to only 0.40 percent (one veteran) reported being on active duty in 1984. Between 1974 and 1984 the Idaho disabled Vietnam-era veterans had entered government employment at a greater rate than the private employment sector of the civilian labor force. Between 1974 and 1984 there was an increase of 14.75 percent of disabled veterans in federal, state and local government positions. This compares to an increase of 8.30 percent of disabled veterans entering the private-employment sector during the same period. Self-employment declined 1.19 percent between 1979 and 1984. Even though this decline may not be statistically significant, it may be due to economic conditions during the 1982 recession.

Between 1974 and 1984 there was a 8.10 percent decrease in combat-injured veterans in private-sector employment. During the same period there was an increase in civilian government employees of 9.45 percent, as well as 9.45 percent increase in self employment workers among combat-injured veterans.

The noncombat-injured veterans have made gains in all areas of the civilian labor force since 1974. In the private-employment sector there has been a 14.37 percent gain, and a gain of 17.04 percent in the total of federal, state and local government employment between 1974 and 1984.

No significant differences were found in level of education between the Vietnam veterans who suffered combat injuries and the veterans whose injuries were not related to a combat situation when comparing high school graduates and college graduates with four-year degrees. The greatest difference between the two groups is in the proportion of two-year college degrees received by combat-injured veterans. The veterans with combat injuries have a greater proportion, a difference of 11.18 percent, of two-year degrees when compared to veterans not receiving service-connected disability for combat injuries. Two-year college degrees traditionally have trained the male population in skilled trades and vocational occupation. The vocational education the combat-injured veterans have obtained provides some explanation as to why they hold a greater percent of blue-collar jobs than the noncombat-injured veterans.

Duration of Unemployment

Duration of unemployment has a direct relationship with the veterans' earned income. The aggregate data collected on the duration of unemployment included all surveyed subjects who did not express their reason for being unemployed.

Even though the difference in duration of unemployment is not statistically significant between combat-injured and noncombat-injured, the noncombat-injured veterans appear to have had a somewhat greater length of unemployment than the combat-injured veterans in 1984.

The noncombat-injured veterans reported a longer duration of unemployment, but a greater number of combat-injured veterans were unemployed in 1984. There were 41 of 95 combat-injured veterans surveyed (43.16 percent) reporting unemployment for one week or more in 1984 as compared to 72 of 244 noncombat-injured veterans surveyed (29.50 percent) reporting unemployment during the same period. It is not possible to calculate the unemployment rate from the data collected in this survey, but 13.68 percent of the combat-injured veterans, and 11.07 percent of the noncombat-injured veterans were unemployed for 52 weeks in 1985.

Summary

The combat-injured veterans comprise approximately 28 percent of the total disabled Vietnam veterans in Idaho. The typical combat-injured veteran would be a 37-year old male with a disability rating of 30 percent from the Veterans Administration. He would most likely have two or more service-connected disabilities that usually involve his arms or legs. The combat-injured veteran would most likely have been discharged from the service before 1974 and have been employed as a blue-collar worker since leaving the military. There is a 95-percent chance he has completed high school, and 22-percent chance he has completed a four-year college degree. There is better than a 25-percent chance that he is economically disadvantaged and eligible for employment assistance programs. If he becomes unemployed he will most likely spend approximately 31.4 weeks seeking employment. When he does become employed the chance the job will be with a government agency or self-employment are greater than with a private employer.

The noncombat-injured veterans comprised 72 percent of the disabled Vietnam-era veterans in Idaho. The typical veteran with an injury or illness not related to combat with an enemy force in Vietnam would be approximately 45.5-years-old and have a disability rating of 20 percent from the VA. The individual would have a greater chance of having no more than one service-connected disability, and this disability would likely be a leg, back or a cardio-vascular problem. There is a 48-percent probability that this person has retired from the military with 20 or more years of service. There is a 28-percent probability the noncombat-injured veteran is employed in a managerial or professional position. This veteran has a 23-percent

chance of being economically disadvantaged and likely will spend 33 weeks looking for employment if unemployed and not retired. There is a 28-percent chance the individual is not seeking work because of voluntary retirement. If seeking work, this person likely will enter government employment, particularly federal employment.

The disabled Vietnam-era veterans living in Idaho have a significantly greater portion of high school graduates than the Idaho male population between 30-60 years of age. Ninety-five percent of all disabled Vietnam-era veterans have received a high school diploma or its equivalent, compared to 78 percent of the Idaho male population. The disabled Vietnam-era veterans and the Idaho male population are equal in the percent of four-year college and post-graduate degrees at 22 percent.

Personal income increases with the increase in four-year degree for the disabled Vietnam-era veterans. The median income for the disabled Vietnam-era veterans with four-years of college education was 75 percent greater at $24,500 than the disabled veterans with high school diplomas at $14,736. Education appears to reduce the percentage of unemployed disabled Vietnam-era veterans. The reduction may be due to the veterans developing skills that are compatible with their service disabilities.

There is no significant difference between the disabled Vietnam-era veterans and the Idaho male population in the types of occupation performed. There is a greater proportion of Vietnam-era veterans employed by the federal government in Idaho than the male population over 16 years of age with a proportionate distribution of the two groups in state and local government.

In 1984 the disabled Vietnam-era veterans had an average income of $14,000. This was approximately $1,800 less than the earned income of the average Idaho worker in 1984.

The duration of unemployment appears to have a direct effect on the decreased wages earned in 1984. The disabled Vietnam-era veterans who were unemployed in 1984 averaged 14 more weeks of unemployment than the national average of 18 weeks of unemployment. Fifty-seven percent of all the disabled Vietnam-era veterans unemployed in 1984 were unemployed for six months or more. Nineteen percent of the U.S. population unemployed during the same period of time was unemployed for six months or more, a difference of 38 percent.

Overall the disabled Vietnam-era veterans and the Idaho male population are similar in educational attainment beyond high school and in their current occupations. The smaller amount of earned income for the disabled Vietnam-era veteran appears to be due to the greater length of unemployment. The greater length of unemployment appears to be related to the type of service-connected disability.

Even though the service-connected disability influences the duration of unemployment, there appears to be a direct relation between attitudes of employers towards Vietnam or Vietnam-era veterans with disabilities. Half of the disabled Vietnam-era veteran felt their disabilities were a definite barrier to employment.

Final conclusions

Three hundred and thirty-nine (339) responses were received from the questionnaires sent to 511 disabled Vietnam-era veterans in Idaho. Ninety-five responses (28 percent) were from veterans receiving service-connected disability due to combat injuries, and 244 responses (71 percent) were from veterans with injuries not related to combat with an enemy force. The veterans responding to the survey represented 37 of the 44 counties in the state of Idaho. Even though the data presented in this thesis are considered representative of the disabled Vietnam-era veteran in Idaho, the findings may not represent their disabled Vietnam-era peers from other areas of the United States because of varying social and demographic characteristics in each state. The following conclusions are based on the data presented in this thesis:

1. The disabled Vietnam-era veterans with injuries directly related to combat with an enemy force are similar to the noncombat-injured veterans in occupational attainment.
2. There is no significant difference in the level of educational attainment between the combat-injured veteran and the noncombat-injured veterans.
3. The combat-injured veterans median taxable income of $15,000 was $3,000 greater than that of the noncombat-injured veterans in 1984. Even though the combat-injured veterans had a greater income than the noncombat-injured veterans, a greater percent of the combat-injured veterans were below the poverty guideline set by the U.S. government in 1984. Twenty-seven percent of the combat-injured veterans were found to be economically disadvantaged as compared to 23 percent of the noncombat-injured veterans.
4. There was no significant difference in the number of weeks of unemployment between the combat-injured veterans and the noncombat-injured veterans. Unemployed combat-injured veterans suffered 32 weeks of unemployment in 1984 as compared to 34 weeks of unemployment for the noncombat-injured veterans.
5. The disabled Vietnam-era veterans have a significantly greater percent of high school graduates than their nonveteran peers in Idaho. By 1984, ninety-five percent of all disabled Vietnam-era veterans had completed high school or received an equivalent certification compared to 78 percent of the Idaho male population between 30-60-years-of-age. There was no significant difference between the disabled Vietnam-era veterans and their Idaho male peers in four-year college degrees and post-graduate degrees. Twenty-two percent of both groups were college graduates.
6. The types of occupations held by disabled Vietnam-era veterans were similar to that of the Idaho male population. No significant differences were found in occupational attainment.
7. The mean taxable income of the disabled Vietnam-era veterans surveyed was $14,000 in 1984. This was $1,793 less

annually than the $15,793 earned by Idaho workers covered by state and federal Unemployment Insurance programs. This comparison does not include all taxable income for the Idaho workers and does not represent total taxable income of the Idaho worker. It is likely that the difference in taxable income between the disabled Vietnam-era veteran and the Idaho worker is much greater than $1,793.

8. The duration of unemployment is 82 percent greater for the disabled Vietnam-era veterans in Idaho than for the general U.S. population. There is a significantly greater duration of unemployment for disabled Vietnam-era veterans at 33 weeks than for the U.S. population with a duration of unemployment of 18.2 weeks.

Unemployment due to three factors

The overall findings show the disabled Vietnam-era veteran similar to their Idaho peers in education and occupation. The disabled Vietnam-era veterans earn less than their Idaho peers and have greater difficulties in becoming employed if they lose their jobs. The greater number of weeks of unemployment appears to be related to three factors:

1. Unless an employer is willing to make adjustment for the physically or mentally disabled in a job, the disabled veterans many times are limited in the type of work they can perform. As the jobs become harder to find, the disabilities become greater barriers in obtaining suitable employment.
2. The attitudes of many employers block a disabled veteran from being hired. It is not uncommon for an employer to see a disabled veteran as a person unable to perform a job as well as a person who is not disabled, even if the veteran has been employed in the occupation or has received formal education in that occupational skill. In addition, a common fear among employers is the potential liability encountered if the veteran is reinjured while working for the company.
3. The attitudes of the veterans that their disability limits their ability to find work or perform a specific job may further contribute to their unemployment. For many disabled veterans these limitations are real, but for many other disabled veterans their attitudes are based on fear, the lack of self-esteem and lack of knowledge. For many veterans there is a fear that employers are going to say no because they are disabled. The greater duration of unemployment does create a loss of self-esteem or self-worth. The lack of knowledge by the disabled veterans on how to overcome the fears employers have about hiring disabled veterans is an additional problem.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made on the basis of the findings and interpretation of this study:

1. The study should be reproduced in Idaho or another state to evaluate whether the findings were biased due to design or sample limitations.
2. The questionnaire used in this study requires refinement. Particularly a more reliable question on income or taxable income that can be compared to a control group of subjects needs to be developed.
3. The study should be expanded to provide additional data on the reason for the greater duration of unemployment among disabled Vietnam-era veterans.

DISABLED VIETNAM-ERA VETERANS IN IDAHO BY CLASS OF WORKERS IN 1984, 1979, AND 1974

Class of worker	Employed in 1984		Employed in 1979		Employed in 1974	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total	**249**	**100.0**	**270**	**100.0**	**267**	**100.0**
Private wage and salary workers	127	51.00	133	49.00	114	42.70
Federal government workers	47	18.88	41	15.19	35	13.11
State government workers	22	8.84	13	4.81	7	2.62
Local government workers	19	7.63	15	5.56	13	4.87
Self-employed workers	33	13.25	39	14.44	18	6.74
Military personnel on active duty	1	0.40	29	10.74	80	29.96

Views from a local office

by Gerald L. Kessel

The first place a newly released veteran goes is home. The second place is to the local Employment Security office to register for work and to file for Unemployment Insurance.

You can spot them as they walk through the door with their large manila envelopes. You could identify them anyway because they are all about 22 years old, healthy looking, bursting with pride and full of self-confidence. They should be, because they have become self-sufficient, world travelers and veterans.

All too often we have to tell them that we have no market for their military occupational skills. Next we have to tell them that we are sorry but they will not be able to get their first unemployment check for eight weeks because of the five-week federal disqualification. By then the new veteran start losing some self-confidence.

This is not the case for the veterans who have GI Bill eligibility. These we can encourage to go to college or vocational school and apply for the VA Work-Study program to earn additional income. Still, many don't participate.

While more veterans are participating in the Montgomery GI Bill (Chapter 30) than those who participated in the Veterans Education Assistance Program (Chapter 32), there are still too many who are not covered. Some report that they were denied eligibility because of their prior military reserve affiliation. Others report that it wasn't

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Gerald L. Kessel is a Local Veterans Employment Representative in Galesburg, IL. He is a former Unemployment Insurance local office manager for the Illinois Department of Employment Security. Some items in this article previously were published in "Stars and Strips, The National Tribune."

explained satisfactorily. Many report that they must have been too immature at the time of entry when they had to make their decision to participate or not to participate. All who didn't participate report that they are sorry they didn't.

The solution: Let's fine tune the current GI Bill (Chapter 30) by making it compulsory for all enlistees with no withdrawal provision. This would make it a veterans' benefit by covering all veterans, insuring that all veteran have an opportunity for retraining, and providing an excellent incentive to attract quality applicants into military service.

A slight reduction in base pay could fund this permanent GI Bill and make it available to veterans indefinitely as an earned right either usable by the veterans, their dependents or survivors.

Unemployment Insurance

The purpose of Unemployment Insurance is to partially compensate individuals for loss of wages when out of work so they will have some income until they return to full employment. Without this insurance many individuals would be forced to accept a lesser wage, underemployment or welfare. Unlike civilians, newly released veterans: do not have an apartment or house; do not have a car; do not have established credit; do not have marketable skills; do not have a work reference; and do not have familiarity with the job market.

It is estimated that newly released veterans require in excess of $2,000 for expenses the first tow months to get reestablished in civilian life. Without Unemployment Insurance, most of them will have less than half the required amount. Civilians are eligible for 26 weeks Unemployment Insurance and receive their first payment in three weeks. Newly released veterans are eligible for 13 weeks Unemployment Insurance and receive their first payment in eight weeks. Only veterans with honorable service who have completed their full term or who have been released early with one of the 100 exceptions are qualified for benefits. Many veterans are denied benefits simply because of confusing wording on the DD-214s.

Federal regulations bar eligibility for benefits in week in which discharged plus four weeks for newly released veterans. Then they face the normal state three-week delay. These veterans can expect their first Unemployment Insurance payment in eight weeks. Newly released veterans are totally unprepared for the delay in Unemployment Insurance. They almost go into shock when they report to their public Employment Security office only to find out that they are either ineligible or eligible for 13 weeks and will not receive payment for eight weeks. This news is like a slap in the face. They need their first Unemployment payments right away -- not two months down the road. Many veterans are forced into underemployment, onto welfare or back into military service because of these delayed payments.

This nation has a responsibility to those who were recruited from civilian life to serve their country. One responsibility is to ensure financial stability for veterans as they transition from military to

civilian life to find gainful employment and their rightful place in society. This transition should be one of dignity, hope and pride, not one of shame, despair and resentment. The following recommendations are submitted for consideration with the purpose of alleviating the financial hardships that newly released veterans now are experiencing:

- Allow Unemployment Insurance for all newly released veterans who have served a minimum of one year and who are discharged or released with honorable service. This would provide payments for all categories of honorable discharges and deny payments to all personnel whose service was other than honorable.
- Allow use of the week-in-which discharged or released from active duty for noncompensable waiting week credit. The last day of service is the same as last day of work for civilians. Civilians earn waiting-week credit for their week-in-which last worked if their wages for that week are less than their weekly benefit amount. This would move payments up one week in many cases.
- Do away with the four-week automatic disqualification. Whether this disqualification was imposed originally to penalize a person for getting out of the service or as an easy way to offset unused leave payments, it is having a serious effect on the morale of ex-service personnel. Doing away with this disqualification would immediately move exservice personnel Unemployment Insurance payments up to four weeks.
- Exempt unused leave payments from disqualifying income for Unemployment Insurance payments. Accrued personal leave for civilians is not disqualifying income. Civilian vacation payments at time of layoff are disqualifying income only if protested by employers. Why should the government protest unused leave payments for service personnel who elected to work in service to their country rather than take the leave? This would ensure that veterans are not denied weekly benefits for unused leave payments at time of separation.
- Reinstate the maximum benefit amount to 26 weeks. Civilians get 26 weeks Unemployment Insurance compared to 13 weeks for exservice personnel. This reinstatement would give newly released veterans an equal chance in the labor market.

Disabled veterans employment

Current definitions of disabled and severely disabled veterans vary from agency-to-agency and program-to-program. For simplicity and uniformity there should be one standard definition for disabled veterans.

Section 2011 of Title 38, Chapter 42 should stay the same, but a new category of "nonservice-connected disabled veteran" should be added. Nonservice-connected disabled/handicapped veterans have some level of employment handicap and require priority employment service. Adding the new category basically would provide two categories of veterans for preference purposes.

There is much concern over the difficulty of being able to identify, locate and assess the large number of severely disabled veterans who are out of the work force. These veterans may be in need of counseling, employment assistance, medical assistance, vocational rehabilitation, etc. Of questionable value were the lists of disabled veterans provided to the state Employment Security offices in the past because there was no uniform method for using the lists for assessment and follow up.

It is important for the Department of Veterans Affairs and the assistant secretary of labor for veterans employment and training to work together to help identify these veterans. To help in this matter, the Disabled American Veterans national employment office, Veterans Administration regional office in Chicago, and International Association of Personnel in Employment Security Veterans Committee are working together to develop a standard questionnaire for a sampling within the state of Illinois for study.

Some kind of follow-up or complaint procedure should be initiated within the federal system that would allow disabled veterans to find out why they were not hired in federal jobs for which they applied.

There is no special emphasis and support placed on Veterans Job Training by Congress or the Department of Veterans Affairs at a time when everything points to the urgent need for retraining veterans in our work force. We should strongly urge Congress and the DVA to support allocation of funding for this program. It was pointed out several times during the VJT congressional hearings that VJT was a very cost-effective program in that future revenues received from the increased earnings of VJT participants far outweighed the training costs.

Since the federally mandated four-week automatic unemployment insurance waiting or disqualification period for newly released veterans (UCX claims) and reduction in maximum benefits to 13 weeks is creating financial hardship for these veterans and putting them at a disadvantage in the labor market, Congress should correct this inequity. This country has a responsibility to those recruited into military service to make sure their transition to civilian life to regain their rightful place in the civilian work force is one of dignity, pride and support, without unnecessary financial hardships.

Few, if any, newly released veterans are aware of the delay they face in payment of unemployment benefits. Many of those who receive honorable discharges will not qualify at all because they didn't complete their full terms of service. For this reason, the military service should advise or counsel active-duty personnel before they are separated, about the anticipated delay in receipt of Unemployment Insurance or possible nonpayment. If nothing else, this would help prepare them for the shock.

There is no single publication or technical information guide designed primarily to keep state Employment Security veteran representatives up-to-date nationally on veteran employment issues.

Some type of periodical bulletin or newsletter should be implemented by ASVETS. Last November I wrote a letter to ASVETS, with copies to the national veterans' service organizations, recommending that funding be sought to provide a national periodical

for state veterans employment representative to keep us informed and to give us an avenue for submitting recommendations for improving service to veterans. Who are in better positions to evaluate the need, and to make recommendations for improvement of veteran employment services, than front-line veteran employment representatives?

I also recommended that the national veterans' service organization magazines continue to carry as much information as possible about veterans' employment issues to help educate their rank-and-file veteran members as to services available so they in turn can help us spread the word.

Repetition is not all bad, either, as we find we have to keep explaining and keep reinforcing the need or importance of considering alternative employment possibilities because the unemployed or underemployed veterans can be in various states of trauma and have difficulty comprehending or deciding on major career changes.

VA work-study

A very effective program that many GI Bill-eligible veterans are unaware of is Veterans Administration Work-study (W-S). Veterans who are attending school full time under GI Bills Chapter 30 (Montgomery), Chapter 31 (VOCREHAB), Chapter 32 (VEAP), or Chapter 34 (Vietnam) may be eligible for work study provided that their local college, state Employment Security office, vet center, etc., has an opening.

This VA program reimburses a student for an amount equal to the hourly minimum wage for part-time work as a veteran resource specialist. These specialists contact veterans to apprise them of the services and benefits available. Not only does this give W-S veterans a chance to earn and learn, but also it gives them an opportunity to help other vets at the same time. An example of how well this program works is that of a small northwestern Illinois Employment Security office that saw its unemployment rate rise from 2 percent and 200 unemployed vets in the mid '70s to more than 20 percent or 3,200 unemployed vets in the mid '80s. It needed all the help it could find to provide support to the vets.

The staff recruited, trained, and utilized an average of five W-S vets per college quarter in its main office and two outreach offices in the four county area. Since 1984, 110 contracts for 55 different vets have been written, most of whom were service connected disabled and Vietnam veterans. Because of their newly acquired work skills and exposure to jobs at the Employment Security office, 95 percent of these W-S vets were placed in permanent, full-time work, often before they finished their first 250-hour contract.

Not only did most of the W-S vets become employed but also they played a very important role in helping that local office place 2,800 vets in full-time work during the same period.

Working with these VA W-S vets was a very emotionally rewarding experience for the entire office staff. Since most of these W-S vets had been long-term unemployed, they were lacking self-confidence. To make matters worse, some didn't have or couldn't afford clothing

required for office work. The staff donated clothing, conducted grooming classes and gave them a lot of support. It amazed the staff how quickly the W-S vets became self-confident and employable.

That same local office was involved in calling for legislation that brought Chapters 30 and 32 under the VA Work-study Program and that opened up W-S opportunities for newly released vets.

That office also submitted recommendations to the Job Training Partnership Act encouraging it to adopt a similar W-S program for vets.

The VA Regional Office in Chicago has a very positive attitude about the W-S Program. It is its enthusiasm that makes this program a success in Illinois. An opening with all eligibility requirements met can be approved over the telephone so the vet can start immediately.

VEAP era

A veteran registering for work with our Employment Security office who has been out of the military for less than 12 months is classified as a recently separated veteran for statistical purposes. Most of our recently separated veterans enlisted during the period 1977-1985 (Veterans' Educational Assistance Program -- VEAP era), and are not vocationally equipped to break into the labor market of the 1980s.

As a result these veterans are stacking up on us because they need retraining before we can find them substantial, gainful employment.

In our four-county area of northwestern Illinois, for example, we had twice as many recently separated veterans registered for work with us in 1988 as we did in 1984, even though our local unemployment rate dropped six percentage points during the same period. More often than not, the special skills that the veterans learned in the military are not adaptable to their hometown job market. This is one of the reasons why a GI Bill is so important for retraining veterans.

The government recognized the need for retraining these veterans by enacting VEAP (Chapter 32). The problems with VEAP were that it wasn't very attractive and veterans could withdraw their contributions. It is a rare occasion when we run across a VEAP-era veteran who has Chapter 32 eligibility. Most of those who participated withdrew from the program before they got out of the service.

Title 38, Chapter 41, Section 2000(1) USC provides in part that, "as long as unemployment and underemployment continue as serious problems among disabled veterans and Vietnam Veterans, alleviating unemployment and underemployment among such veterans is a national responsibility."

Since unemployment and underemployment for disabled veterans, Vietnam veterans and recently separated veteran continue to be a serious problem, maybe a consideration would be for Congress to change this section to read: "As long as unemployment and underemployment continue as serious problems among veterans, alleviating unemployment and underemployment among veterans is a national responsibility. Other recommendations for consideration are:

- That the Job Training Partnership Act have veterans preference similar to the public employment offices.
- That recently separated veterans be brought in under the Veterans Job Training Program, if that program is refunded.
- That veterans be qualified for JTPA and Targeted Job Tax Credit regardless of family income if they have been underemployed, unemployed 10 of 15 weeks, or if they are dislocated workers. (Veterans report that they have been found ineligible for these programs because they had to move in with their parents for extended periods and that the income of their parents put them over total family income guidelines.)

These VEAP-era veterans voluntarily devoted two, three, four or more years to military service and the global peace-keeping mission of this country. They deserve all the consideration we can give them in their pursuit to find meaningful employment.

Veteran Job Training Act

Two House Veterans' Affairs subcommittee hearings on education, training and employment were held in Galesburg, IL, to gather information about the Veterans Job Training Act. The subcommittee came to Illinois first on July 2, 1985, due to high veteran unemploment and returned again on July 15, 1987, for the same reason.

The facts gathered at these hearings played a major role in the extensions and refinement of the program. So encouraging was the testimony given by VJTA employers and veterans that some of it was read before the full House prior to its vote on the current extension.

Even though VJTA has been extended for two years, funding for 1989 has been delayed. It is not clear whether the reasons for this are due to the national deficit or the dropping unemployment rate. I strongly believe in reducing the national deficit, but think the best way to achieve this is through a highly skilled work force that can out class foreign competition.

As encouraging as the drop in the unemployment rate is, the annual number of veterans seeking work through Illinois Employment Security offices climbed to 114,000 in 1986 and then leveled off again at just over 100,000 by Program Year 1988.

Continued funding of the VJTA program certainly could help Illinois, which has had over 100,000 veterans seeking employment through its offices each year for five consecutive Program Years. As with many other states, hundreds of Illinois veterans lost their manufacturing jobs with good pay and benefits. To make matters worse, there was little demand for their industrial job skills. Many of these veterans, through necessity, have been forced to accept lesser skilled jobs paying half what they were accustomed to and with fewer benefits. Other are still unemployed, have given up or are on welfare.

Those few that still had GI Bill (Chapter 34) eligibility had the option of seeking retraining through college or vocational school. Many couldn't afford to go to school because their GI Bill eligibility

had expired even though they hadn't used it. VJTA was one of the few avenues left for them to receive retraining.

VJTA is an excellent, cost-effective program that is easy to work with and which just keeps getting better with time. The VA Regional Office in Chicago gives excellent support in administering this program. It is well-accepted by employers and currently is in demand. Veterans like the program because it gives them a ray of hope for their future.

In my testimony before these two hearings I encouraged Congress to refund VJTA on a three-year basis and provide for a renegotiable clause six months before the expiration to eliminate the annual "on-again/off-again" funding that hurts our creditability with employers and veterans.

It was further recommended that the program be modified to include all veterans, especially newly released veterans. These veterans are experiencing a delay or false start as they try to regain their rightful place in the civilian work force due to the federally mandated five-week Unemployment Insurance disqualification for recently released veterans. Many VEAP era veterans who enlisted between 1977-1984 also are having difficulty finding work because they need retraining and didn't participate in the GI Bill (Chapter 32).

Another recommendation was for Congress to consider extending the Vietnam Veteran GI Bill (Chapter 34) to the year 2000 and to eliminate the 10-year usage/delimiting period that would help thousands of veterans receive retraining, especially those who couldn't find a VJTA position.

A survey of veteran staff members' perceptions of veterans service needs

by Ken West

Veterans present a unique challenge to the California Employment Development Department. The veteran, while more mature and seasoned than other job seekers, also may have a variety of barriers to employment. While the federal and state governments have recognized the veteran's special contribution to society through various programs, the employment of veterans remains a significant problem.

In an attempt to discover the major challenges in veterans' placement a study was conducted at the second annual Local Veterans' Employment Representative and Disabled Veteran Outreach Program specialist conference held in Ontario, CA, the last week of May, 1989.[1] The study's purpose was to discover the perceptions of veterans' staff of the barriers to employment or the factors leading to successful placement of veterans in two areas -- the organization and the veteran. The conference was attended by 392 persons. The average number responding was 119 or 30.36 percent.

Ken West is a native of California, and a Vietnam veteran. He holds a master degree from California State University, Fresno in Organizational Development. He currently is working as a Disabled Veteran Outreach Program specialist in the Fresno, CA, local office of the California Employment Development Department.

The first area addressed was the perceptions of LVER/DVOPs of the veteran. The questions in this area were concerned with training needs of veterans, barriers to employment of veterans and the availability of community support.

The single most mentioned factor about the veteran population is lack of job skills. In fact 70 percent of those responding indicated that more than 30 percent of the veterans they work with need additional job skills to be employable. More than one-forth of the veterans staff estimated that more than 50 percent of their clientele need more job skills. The solutions advanced by the staff to the lack of job skills is to increase employer incentives and to strengthen laws.

Employer incentives would include the extension of the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit to all veterans and the refunding of the Veterans Job Training Act. The existing laws could be strengthened in the area of the Mandatory Job Lister and expanded to include unions. The military should be required either to certify skills learned in the military as applicable to their civilian counterparts or to establish a predischarge vocational-schooling system. This system would ensure that the newly discharged veteran had marketable job skills on discharge from active duty.

Getting a veteran services is possible if the myriad of programs can be brought to bear on the problems. The coordination of community resources is the second most commonly mentioned problem by the veteran staff member. The unemployed veteran may have multiple barriers to employment requiring the concerted efforts of several agencies. Even knowing that the programs are in the community is a problem because there is a lack of up-to-date community resource guides. If an agency can be found, the paperwork for each agency (often redundant) is time consuming and frustrating to the veteran. The problem of several agencies administering job services programs increases the cost of service delivery to the veteran because of parallel administrative structures, not to mention the time spent by the veterans' representative in identification of and qualification for programs.

Coordinated community resources lacking

A second problem identified by the respondents is the lack of coordinated community resources. A veteran may be suffering with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. The individual may be homeless, without transportation, clean clothes, or food. There may be a serious alcohol or drug problem, or an arrest record. The veterans representative needs to know how to effectively marshal the various agencies' resources to bring the veteran to a state of job readiness. In order to bring the resources into play the veterans representative must know that they exist and how to quickly and effectively get a veteran accepted for service. Sixty-five percent of the respondents disagreed with the statement, "Community-based programs are readily available for veterans." Likewise, to the response to the statement, "The various training and outreach programs for veterans are well coordinated," 24 percent strongly disagreed, with total disagreement

of 68 percent. Overall it seems clear from the response of LVERs and DVOPs throughout California that community-based programs are not well coordinated and in many cases not available. Since it is axiomatic that placing a person in a job requires a minimum level of vocational skills and a level of social skills, it follows that until the agencies charged with serving veterans develop strong cooperative bonds the unemployed veteran will remain a problem.

The second question asked in the LVER/DVOP study, "The percentage of veterans I will place in employment more than once?" The majority of responses indicated that between 10-30 percent will be placed more than once. The majority of respondents felt they placed only 30 percent in long-term employment. The comments on the study supported the numbers. Veterans with marginal skills or adjustment difficulties tend to be placed more than once because they are placed in relatively short-term employment.

The LVERs and DVOPs perception of the veteran is that the unemployed veteran usually has multiple barriers to employment, that community programs are either unavailable or poorly coordinated and that the jobs the veteran can get are either short term of pay very poorly. Conversely, the well-educated, highly skilled and motivated veteran is out of the system quickly, leaving the hard-to-place veteran. The comments made on the study indicate that there may be some organizational barriers to moving these hard-to-place veterans in permanent jobs that have advancement potential.

Fifty percent of the respondents agreed that, "management understands and supports the mission of the LVER/DVOP staff." Thirty-five percent disagreed, and 15 percent had no opinion. The response to this question indicates that there is a tremendous amount of variability in the use of veteran service staff. Many comments were made that the veteran staff should be working with the hard to place veteran, and instead is being used to fulfill mainstream objectives. For example, one person commented that, "Veteran service staff is being used to do intake and find jobs for veterans with good skills who should be placed by ES staff, while my veterans with barriers go begging." On the other hand several comments were made such as, "The new manager feels it's very important that the veterans' representative be part of the management team...all veteran-related input is high on manager's priorities."

While expressing a high degree of dissatisfaction with advancement opportunities (64 percent dissatisfied to 13 percent satisfied), veteran representative expressed satisfaction with their work in the organization, with 58 percent responding they were satisfied and only 18 percent being dissatisfied. The major difficulty in the organization as expressed by the veteran representatives was that information often was received too late to be effective. Last, the comments indicated that a qualitative as well as a quantitative measurement factor should be developed for veteran placements.

Summary

The study showed that California veterans' representatives feel that they should be working with the hard-to-place veteran that may have multiple barriers to employment; that community resources are poorly coordinated or not available; that the loss of VJT has hurt the veteran; that all veterans should be guaranteed at least minimal job skills; and that the laws concerning Mandatory Job Listers be strengthened. The Employment Development Department, while seen in a positive light by the majority of the respondents, was seen as not having a consistent interpretation of the role of the veteran staff.

This field study indicated that while there are many frustrations involved in dealing with multiple agencies, interpretations and clients, the job essentially is rewarding.

Footnote

1. The study was conducted without the approval of the California Employment Development Department. The study was anonymous and voluntary. Individuals who chose to participate did so on their own time.

Making Title 38 work from the bottom up

by Charles M. Kerns

From the Plymouth Colony in 1636 to the enactment of Public Law 100-323 in 1988, our nation has provided legislation to assist its veterans returning from service.

Job Service, as we know it today, came into being with the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933. Veterans' employment and veterans' preference were established with this legislation. The Veterans Benefit Act of 1958 (PL 85-857) codified all veterans' laws into Title 38 U.S. Code, Veterans Benefits. There has been much more legislation that preceded and followed these, which involve employment services in general and veteran services in particular. These two, however, have had the most impact in providing a structured system to help the returning veteran find work.

Charles Kerns has served 15 years as a Local Employment Representative with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. He also has served as a welfare caseworker, an employment counselor, and as an employer relations representative. He is a graduate of Youngstown State University, and is a five-year veteran of the United States Air Force.

This article is a reflection of how these public laws are perceived and utilized at the most important level -- the point of service -- the bottom. This article also is an abstract piece involving one Local Veteran Employment Representative's experience and opinion. It represents no official entity. It does not attempt to encompass the myriad of veteran legislation, veteran programs, seminars or areas of administrative expertise. There may be no new idea in this article. Everything may have been tried or rejected; enacted or in process of enactment. Rather than being ideal and formalistic from the top, it is substantive and real at the bottom.

Criticism, as in all areas of quality control, should attempt to improve on what already may be very good product. Winston Churchill's observation that democracy was the worst form of government, except for all others that have been tried, is a prime example. In this perspective we in service to our veterans must remember that even in the Garden of Eden the grass still needs cut. With that in mind, we can start again from the bottom.

From the bottom

Title 38 sets the rules. Under the cooperating agreement with the Veterans' Employment and Training Service and the United States Employment Service, the local office manager at the field level calls the shots. Title 38, the law, becomes as effective as the "fifth skip of a flat rock on a pond." It becomes a "document of interpretation" as it filters through the bureaucratic process to the bottom. At this point, local attitudes and philosophies have more impact on quality of service to veterans than does the **Congressional Record**.

A veteran representative's job description may consist of pages of duties and services that, under law, must be provided to the veteran to be served. However, the last line in that job description might read that, in an emergency situation, the LVER may be utilized as needed. This reminds one of the old "Indian Treaties" that seemed to say, "This is your land as long as the grass grows, the sun shines, the rivers run..." and at the bottom "...or 90 days, whichever comes first."

Emergency changes are, on paper, not an unrealistic concept; however, it can be a dangerous precedent. An LVER's effectiveness can be regulated from 100 percent to 0 percent on a whim. Emergency changes can become daily and last for years. In a local office "fluid priorities" change continually with program needs and staff shortages and can bring about an "Alamo concept" where whoever is available must be used. In the spirit of cooperation, this is understandable. But for LVERs to become designated interviewers and receptionists so that other programs may be covered is at best an act not of cooperation but of compromise.

In 1979 a training program and seminar was held in Philadelphia, for veteran representatives from federal Region 3 of the Veterans' Employment Service. This program was perhaps a forerunner of the National Veterans Training Institute. It lasted 2½ days. About 25 LVERs and Disabled Veteran Outreach Program specialist from the states comprising Region 3 attended. The program was well

structured and was administered by top representatives of the VES and the federal Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration. One LVER traveled from Western Pennsylvania across the turnpike to Philadelphia for the program. His assignment, immediately prior to the training, involved the total effort of assisting high school summer-youth participants find work. The assignment lasted three months

From the program's outset, Title 38 and its mandate were presented. LVERs and DVOPs were admonished that in no way could they deviate from their 100-percent duty to serve veterans. Suddenly a hand raised. The speaker, a bit nonplused as his speech was still in process reluctantly responded. The LVER from across the state asked, "What if we're not providing 100-percent services to our vets?" The speaker asked for an explanation. The LVER explained, and then asked if it would be all right to refuse such "improper assignments" in the future so that compliance with Title 38 might be realized?

At this point everything stopped. The two representatives from VES and ETA huddled in the corner and came back with an answer. "Listen to your manager," was their reply. A bit confused the LVER sat back. The opening remarks continued. More of the same type of rhetoric followed about duty, service, commitment and federal law. Again, the hand went up. Annoyed at the second interruption, the speaker reluctantly acknowledged the raised hand. "And what would happen if my office were audited, and I am working as assigned but not according to the law? Will I be in jeopardy or am I protected?" Another break. Another corner meeting. The reply was, "If it happens, we'll just pull your position." The hand didn't go up again.

How about that for a quality control concept? Be receptive to good news. In the event bad news clouds your doorstep, kill the messenger.

Looking up

That was then, and this is now. Fiscal Year 1989, from the field level, fared better for veteran services than any preceding year in the decade. LVERs and DVOPs were given the opportunity and assignment to provide 100 percent of their time in services to vets. Veteran concerns and priorities were felt from every level in the Commonwealth's Department of Labor and Industry. Local and district management both encouraged and required a positive commitment toward veteran preference in all Job Service programs. The Veteran's Employment and Training Service, in tandem with renewed energy expressed from the USES, flexed its Title 38 muscles and provided positive support for the welcome changes that were occurring in the quality of veteran services at the field level. The interest and concern from the office of the state director of Veterans Employment also were in evidence during this period.

Positive programs and efforts that come to mind include "Workforce 2000 and America's Vets." Bill 100-123, which redefined and reinforced the implementation of veteran services, made its impact felt at the field level. Three most valuable players in this era of good feeling and its win streak for vets are Donald Shasteen, former

U.S. Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veteran Employment and Training; Ronald Drach, national employment director, Disabled American Veterans; and John Nunnery, executive director, National Veterans Training Institute. Like a preacher who wonders, after the congregation leaves if anyone got the message, we did! Loud and clear. It's still rippling at the "fifth skip."

To put a finger on the single most important program in the change, it would point to NVTI. In a recent **Stars and Stripes** article lauding Shasteen's accomplishment in sheparding the start of NVTI, the author indicated that at NVTI many veteran representatives for the first time became aware of their statutory job responsibilities. To point out the need for change, and to offer a sounding board for those field-level veteran representatives present for training, NVTI became the "signifier." Reports, recommendations, and concerns were both felt and received at high levels in VETS and USES.

Another important aspect would be the computer, the "verifier." Evidence of errant programs and staff misuse became readily available through computer printouts, which corroborated information that previously was reported. Then came the change, the "certifier." Felt from Top to Bottom, and USES and VETS programs, procedures, priorities and policies came quickly into focus.

From the top

Now that veterans' services are being more clearly defined, it is time to more clearly define the veteran servicer. The 0-100-percent LVER continuum leans toward the century mark as it should. However, the 100-percent concept becomes muddled in some local office philosophies to mean that no other staff member need concern himself with veterans; that 100 percent of veterans' services can be provided by 100 percent of the veterans staff. This philosophy is 100-percent wrong. If an LVER is the quarterback of veterans' services in a local office, anyone knows what the effectiveness ratio would be without line personnel. The LVER, in order to be more effective in leading and encouraging local office staff in meeting veterans' services mandates, must clearly have a role in this effort more clearly defined. One concept in need of change is functional supervision.

The term functional supervision is a bureaucratic euphemism that seems to mean, "you're almost in charge, in a way." It has as much clout as an assistant manager's assistant in a shoe store. Responsibility without authority is dysfunctional.

Another area of concern is the marriage of USES and VETS. The spirit of cooperation and coordination between these two agencies makes it easy in time of need to be clouded by the spectre of compromise. Budget constraints, shortages of staff, and emergency programs all cause program rollovers and changing priorities. Too often vet reps have answered the call for help, in sacrifice of their own programs. It's not that veteran representatives want to be hands-off prima donnas who are unwilling to pitch in as emergencies arise, it's that they don't want to be placed in the "we've already established what you are, we're only quibbling prices" milieu. A more defined

program concept for veteran services, if not a separation, may be in order to maintain the integrity of the program.

Making it work

Just like the song "New York, New York" we need to spread the news, convert attitudes, change philosophies, remove apathy, universalize and strengthen purpose in services to our veterans from top to bottom, bottom to top. Mixes classes at NVTI, already beginning, include managers, Employment Service supervisors and line personnel. They may in the long run, have more impact on veteran services at the field level than the training of veteran representatives.

The importance of veterans' programs should have greater emphasizes in the orientation of all new personnel, from the reception point up. Veterans' mandates should be reemphasized at levels of supervision and management.

Let's also put some money where the mouth is. For veterans programs to be respected, for vet representation to be an integral part of an office, for quality staff to be recruited and maintained, for vet representatives to be treated as quasi-line supervisors in their functional role, pay them accordingly. Require USES to allow the LVER to be paid at the same grade as first-level supervision in all local offices. This is a very important step toward program credibility. It also les-sens that tendency for program rollovers to occur.

The DVOP should make at least as much money as the ES interviewer. This change already is in process in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The DVOP position should not be dead ended. A transitional advancement ladder should be initiated so that with training, education and experience these men and women, most of whom are disabled vets themselves, should have the opportunity to advance to higher paying positions, including LVER.

For program continuity perhaps federalization of the entire VETS network may be in order. As rumors of budgetary and staffing concerns loom on the horizon, federalization may become necessary in order to prevent future dilution of veterans services at crunch time.

To maintain program continuity and acceptable levels of service, a new reporting procedure must be initiated. LVERs at the field level, at the bottom, should be required to complete a yes-or-no, quality-review questionnaire every six months. This report should not go to the local office manager or district manager's office or to field-level VETS staff. It should go directly from bottom to top to the assistant secretary. This not only will prevent an erosion of services at the local office level, but also it will set priorities for quality-review visits for field personnel with a built in correction mechanism. Of all changes, this one is most important, for it would be a substantive, universal effort to maintain program integrity, a better method of communication.

NVTI certainly should be continued. It has shown to be a welcome beacon on a dark night for a veterans' program seeking direction. It is encouraging that NVTI continues to grow and continues to be funded. It is fast becoming an invaluable resource aid for all who are seeking information and guidance in all areas of service to veterans.

Finally, a reminder to the top brass. This is self-evident. To stay on top, we need a solid foundation -- a good bottom. For the continuity of a good veterans' program under Title 38, when your field people call out, listen! When they seek help, send reinforcements! Most importantly, when a distant voice from the trenches has some bad news, help effect a change, don't kill the Messenger.

Veterans Workforce 2000 issues: the tank driver's dilemma

by John Stine

Just off Interstate 35 in the Texas heartland is the U.S. Army's Fort Hood, home to the 3rd (U.S.) Mobile Armored Corps, one of several armor training centers located around the country. It is a 217,337-acre showplace. Men and women from across the nation are sent there to learn military skills and modern battlefield tactics.

In nearby Killeen, the closest civilian town to Fort Hood, the off-post military dependent population prospers under the watchful eye of the Texas Employment Commission's Mike Bartlett and the staff he supervises. From their Job Service office on South W.S. Young Street, Bartlett oversees an agreement he developed between that office and the U.S. Army to provide job services for the post's dependents, the only contract like it in the nation. Military officials view it as exemplary civilian support.

John Stine is a professional in the Staff Development Division of the Texas Employment Commission.

Fort Hood is a very busy post. Supporting the equivalent of two battle divisions and numerous high-tech weapons systems with the support personnel needed to operate them, Fort Hood boasts of being the largest Army post in the continental United States. With an assigned troop strength of a little over 39,000 military people, a total population exceeding 63,000 including on-post military dependents, a commissary complex that rivals most urban shopping centers and the use of nearby 12,300-acre Lake Belton with its 136 miles of shoreline for water sports recreation, it appears to be one of the finest military installations anywhere.

Yet Fort Hood is not without its problems. Aside from the obvious environmental nuisances of summer heat, prickly pear cactus, dust storms and tornadoes, there is the less-understood, work-related obstacle Mike Bartlett and his staff have not been able to overcome -- the lack of usable civilian job skills by people leaving active duty.

Whether retirees with 20 years of service or young people completing a three- or four-year enlistment, whether in their early 20s or late 40s, these are representative veterans facing an uncertain future. The problem is employment. Many military skills cannot be used in civilian occupations. Converting from one to the other is often awkward, sometimes impossible.

Perhaps most visible in Fort Hood's occupational arsenal is the tank driver. Like so many others it is a **Military Occupational Specialty** that has little in common with jobs to be found in the civilian labor market. How the tank driver and other veterans trained to do similar military tasks might be placed more easily in a good civilian job is a question begging for attention. An effective solution to this and other work-related problems could have a profound effect on veterans employment as we approach the year 2000.

Identifying local office service frustrations

Like most Job Service offices throughout the nation local Job Service offices in Texas all offer veteran services; some by just one staffer assigned multiple duties in a one- or two-person office, others working within a veteran service unit of several people -- usually composed of a Local Veterans' Employment Representative, one or more Disabled Veterans Outreach Program positions and a clerical staffer or two. The size of the staff usually is determined by the size of the city the office is in and its veteran population.

Most military separation centers urge returning service men and women to use the Job Service to find work after separation or discharge. Some report almost immediately after they return from active duty. Others put off "asking for help" until they have literally exhausted all other means of finding a job. In any event when they do go to the Job Service office it's usually with a sense of urgency -- the need for immediate earnings; the desire for a good, well-paying job. Seldom are they prepared to wait, to find that work is not available for them or to learn they do not have the skills needed to get a good civilian job.

Still that's the frustration many returning military men and women experience when they ask Job Service staffers for work. How severe the jobless problem, or what it takes to fix it, often depends on the geographical area involved and the condition of the economy in that place. It also can depend on the attitude of both the community at large toward veterans in general, or in particular on the charity of the employers doing the hiring. Maybe most important is the helpfulness and expertise of those Job Service staffers assigned to assist the veteran by providing requested services. Getting to know a little about a representative sample of these people might help make the picture clearer.

Capital city expectations in a medium-sized office

Bruce Davis had worked almost 10 years as the LVER in Austin's South office. Texas IAPES chapter past-president Harvey Alex is manager there, one of three medium-sized offices in the Texas capital city. Davis and Alex make quite a team -- Alex, the exprofessional baseball player the military rejected because of a bum knee, and Davis, drafted after college for duty as a medical assistant stationed in Colorado during the Vietnam era. Both are committed to a quality veterans program, yet frustrations temper their effectiveness.

The biggest problem, Davis said, is the tank driver's lack of job skills. What we're left with, he said, are the intangibles -- responsibility, trust and, maybe, maturity. That means all we have to sell is the outside chance that the tank driver might now be a little more responsible because he or she has learned to drive a tank, or maybe trust, if they came out with an honorable discharge, and, of course, they've grown up a little bit in the meantime -- in at 18 or so, out at 21-22. But very little of that is of any real interest to employers.

When pressed for a job opportunity for such a veteran, Davis admitted the choices were slim to none. "We'd convert his primary **MOS** (tank driver) to truck driver," he said, then hastened to add, "even though that offers very little opportunity in today's labor market -- few jobs, many applicants." Davis said he also would explore the tank driver's premilitary history, "part-time jobs while going to school, that sort of thing, or summer work."

Manager Alex said his main concern was placement. "We want to find work for all of them," he said. "I tell Bruce to do whatever he needs to do to get the job done." So a lot of the veteran's other nagging problems are neatly side stepped. Homeless vets, their plight, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder he said were things for the Veterans Administration to worry about. Those cases are referred directly to the VA. Besides, he said, we really don't see that many in our urban area -- downtown, maybe, but not here -- a pattern noted in other study reports (Secretary's Commitee on Veterans Employment 1989, 9).

Of greatest concern, Davis insisted, is a feeling he's gotten lately about the public's attitude toward vets. "What I'm feeling," he said, "is the likelihood that few people really care anymore. Some don't even think vets deserve a break, or should be given preferential treatment or some kind of priority. What I'm feeling is that our vets are

beginning to fall through the cracks, there's no safety net, and there's lots of 'em living on the edge."

Has the nation's attitude worsened? No, Davis said he didn't mean that. In fact, he thinks it's gotten better -- from contempt to indifference. But even that still is hurting those vets whose own attitude has evolved from a hidden hostility toward institutions in our society to one that's "more or less" open and proud. Maybe the vets have mellowed, he said. Or maybe the change came because of that great monument they finally built for them in Washington -- that stark, black marble wall with the names of all those Vietnam vets inscribed. That was a tremendous morale booster, he said.

Rural job opportunities along the nation's southern border

Brownsville in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas serves the Job Service needs of the lower border area with its citrus groves, light truck farming and small service industries. Joe Hearn is the LVER there, a job he has held for nine years or so. He said he wouldn't worry much about a tank driver looking for work down there -- "we'd make something available."

Echoing Austin's Davis, Hearn said they weren't worried much about the homeless in Brownsville, even though "one sleeps in our office doorway each night, and takes a shower in the men's room when we're open." Even the few living under the International Bridge (between the U.S. and Mexico) aren't a concern, he said, "because we never see them."

But the vets we do see, Hearn hastened to add, have lots of needs we have not been able to completely satisfy. Fort Hood's tank driver is a good example. While we'd find work, Hearn said, "it would probably not be work paying much above minimum wage -- he'd need better skills to earn more."

What is really needed, Hearn said, "is a concerted effort to get all employers to use us (the Job Service)." He doesn't have the time to do that, he said, and believes it would take a public relations "expert" to do it right. "I've also read where others feel much the same way I do (IAPES 1989d, 3)," he said.

Hearn was greatly impressed by the National Veterans Training Institute, particularly after spending a few days there for a training program. "Those Denver people have developed some super material," he said, suggesting all Employment Service staff should be "exposed" to the things they're teaching (IAPES 1989c, 3, 17; 1989e 12; SCOVE 1988d, 9).

Rural job opportunities in the Texas Panhandle

Newly appointed LVER Chester Carlson is assigned to the four-position Borger, TX, office. His attitude toward serving the tank driver differed little from that of his larger office counterparts. But, he cautioned, jobs in the Texas Panhandle have only little compatibility with military tasks no matter what the military specialty. He said to compensate he'd simply convert the tank driver's **MOS** to a truck

driver's **Dictionary of Occupation Titles** code and try to find him part-time work immediately until something full-time opened up. Why go for part-time immediately? Because the immediate problem is truck driver openings -- there just aren't any, he said.

That means they'd do a lot of job development, Carlson said -- calling employers to ask for a job for that specific veteran. Most employers, he insisted, have something the vet can handle. A few will even take on one (a veteran) just to be neighborly.

Carlson said he'd also talk to the veteran about going elsewhere for work. Amarillo is only an hour's drive from Borger, he said. And Pampa is just a scant 30 minutes down the highway -- people in big cities often drive a lot further, particularly if they live in the suburbs and work downtown.

"The Borger office used to be well-known for its outstanding work with veterans," Carlson said. Several years running it claimed the IAPES chapter's trophy for Small Office Veterans Services. "We plan to become competitive again," he said.

Small office opportunities

"We're family out here," Sweetwater Job Service local office manager and part-time LVER Jerre Howard said matter-of-factly. TEC is part of the community. Returning vets get preference. It's just that simple.

Sweetwater is about 180 miles west of Fort Worth. Farming and ranching now are the area's main activities. Howard, 8 or 9 years in her LVER position, reminisced, "We used to send 'em straight to an oil rig -- good money for strong backs." But now the oil rigs sit idle, she said, so they all just pitch in and spread the word, "new vet in town needing work. You might say we put 'em in work search," she chuckled, a subtle reference to the use of computers to match people with jobs in big cities' offices. "Here, we still use paper applications," she said, "and they still know everyone by name."

"You also might say," Howard said candidly, "I don't much like the federal government's approach to the vets unemployment benefit situation (the UCX program). That four-week disqualification gimmick (based on leaving a job by refusing to reenlist) is absurd! It's also unfair." An IAPES veterans work-study conference came to the same conclusion (IAPES 1989b, 10.)

Sweetwater and Jerre Howard have been winning IAPES trophies for outstanding services to veterans for a small office since the early 1980s. Theirs is a quality approach.

Large office challenges in downtown Houston

Kay Baker, 4½-year Navy veteran and DVOP works with LVER Tom Garcia and DVOP Susan Currie in Houston's large downtown Job Service office on Austin Street. Total office staff is 70. Texas chapter past president Joel Terry is the Houston Region director.

Without hesitation Baker said he would convert the tank driver's **MOS** to front-end loader, give him an additional **DOT** code for

common labor, and then refer him to one of the city's public utility suppliers -- two gas companies and Houston Power & Light. "You might say we have this agreement with them," he said.

Beyond that the area is hurting, Baker said. "As far as I can tell, no branch of the service is giving its military people any good counseling. So, first thing we do is counsel with every vet who walks through our door." Baker's complaint seems to be one shared by others (IAPES 1989e,1).

"Few of the vets I talk to have any job skills," Baker said. Many are functionally illiterate. He said most of the veterans he sees need literacy training first, then skill training.

Now is definitely the time to provide training for veterans, agreed Region Director Terry. That's because it's an employer's market in Houston today -- too many applicants, too few jobs. And then, once trained, employers ought to be encouraged to consider hiring "the best qualified" vets first, others after, he said -- another concern voiced by an IAPES work-study conference (IAPES 1989c, 11).

"Homeless veterans? Shucks, yes, we see lots of 'em here," DVOP Baker said. "But we can't do much for 'em. They're getting a bum rap. The VA, it seems, labels them homeless, chronic mentally ill. I think that is very unfair. They ought to be simply categorized as homeless veterans, not crazies (IAPES 1989e, 4)."

Actually, Baker said, few of the homeless ever come to the Job Service office. Most go to a nearby storefront veterans center set up by the VA where there is a DVOP on duty. There also are a couple of other shelters around the neighborhood they use -- most are church affiliated. For short-term food and shelter they are referred to the Salvation Army.

Baker said they also are starting to see a few more female veterans than in the past, although most go to Houston's Regional VA office for help -- a trend noted by veterans people in other states (IAPES 1989f, 2). He said he thought the reason for that was a reluctance on the part of many females to be identified as an exmilitary person, or an unwillingness to attempt going out for jobs that were not among the traditional jobs for women -- clerical, sales or janitorial sorts of work. In any event, he said, two DVOPs are stationed at the VA to help them.

Another Sunbelt office near San Antonio's Alamo

Five people are on the veteran service staff at San Antonio's downtown Job Service office on Dwyer Street. DVOP Alfred Trinidad is one of those. He served with an Army Redstone Unit in Germany before joining LVER Elmer Young and the others in the veteran unit.

DVOP Trinidad said he would refer Fort Hood's tank driver to a job driving heavy equipment or other stop gap work. He also said funds ought to be made available to train tank drivers (and others like them) for other work. "Those funds are needed now," he said. New vets need both literacy and job skill training, older vets need retraining to compensate for skills now becoming obsolete -- a notion advanced by others (IAPES 1989e, 5).

Like his counterpart in Houston, Trinidad says the homeless veterans are a problem in San Antonio. "They're coming here from the North expecting miracles," he said. "We call 'em snowbirds. They're flocking to the Sunbelt, I believe, because they hear its warm here and we have jobs. You see many of them on the street corners. Some hold up cardboard signs that say, 'will work for food.' Most look like bums. A few of them are women. Yet, although they're here only a few of them actually ever come into our office asking for anything. Rather, they head for the shelters when it gets dark, sleep until 6 a.m. when they're turned back onto the streets and then spend their day begging again. For many, I think, it's become a lifestyle. Some even refuse a job when it's offered."

Trinidad said he has two concerns about the veterans program in general. One he called an improvement measure. "What I'd like to see," he said, is something -- a restriction or a law -- that would limit the number of veteran applicants referred to a specific job. What we have now, too often, he said, is chaos -- too many referrals, too much wasted motion.

Trinidad's second recommendation concerns employers with federal contracts. Mandatory listing, he said, also should carry with it a first priority in interviewing veterans for those jobs. While refusing to insist that referred veterans ought to be hired if qualified, a position taken by others (IAPES 1989c, 11), he said he felt a lot more of them would end up being hired if they were just given that chance.

The tank driver's dilemma summarized

Consensus among LVERs, DVOPs and others, seems to indicate fairly clearly that today's returning veteran probably needs literacy training and some type of job-skill development on separation or discharge. Most fault the military for the veteran's lack of education. That is because literacy is not considered important for many military jobs -- skills can be learned that will compensate. A study titled, "Adult Illiteracy in the United States," published in 1979 claimed, "...although many recruits in low-level military occupation were unable to read the materials deemed necessary, they nevertheless performed their jobs adequately." That same study concluded that completion of high school is not a reliable indicator of functional illiteracy (Hunter and Hartman, 1979, 30), supporting a conclusion that the nation's educational system is producing an unacceptably high percentage of graduates who still cannot compete for many of the nation's better-paying jobs because their educational achievement level is too low. Many enter the military service precisely because they do not need to be literate to compete for military jobs. Several other researchers have been saying much the same thing lately (Goldstein and Fraser 1985, 38; Schumacher 1979, 123).

The dilemma posed here centers on the fact that both the Department of Defense and the military service branches already offer a vast array of training programs for military personnel. In their "Training for the Computer Age" study, Goldstein and Fraser state the DoD offers over 7,000 courses in which "over 95 percent is (sic)

designed to provide new skills," and over 55 percent is specialized skill training. They further claim "the majority of the skills learned in these courses are transferable to civilian occupations, and, historically, the military has long provided a way for young men and women to get technical training applicable to civilian jobs." (Goldstein and Fraser 1985, 27.)

If skill training is available, why is the tank driver missing out? Austin's LVER Davis probably scored a bull's eye here when he remarked that "tankers" are often above that sort of thing -- the bravado and braggadocio that seems to go along with the tank driver's mystique precludes such activities. Davis said he suspects that kind of macho posturing also keeps other military people who are doing a lot of other specialized military tasks away from the classroom. The immediate result: educationally deficient soldiers. Worse, it means people unprepared for both today's labor market and the better-paying jobs projected for the year 2000 and beyond (Johnston and Packer 1987, 99-100).

It would seem the real problem is one of emphasis and, by association, one of acceptance. Egotism would appear to be the key. Education seems to be the solution. The dilemma is that changing those basic attitudes is not likely without the necessary training, and vice versa. Perhaps a different "learning system" is needed (Schon 1971, 30). Or maybe a better design for the one already in place would do -- one that could lead to a different kind of world, one in which people could learn to tell the difference between good work and bad (Schumacher 1979, 118). That, in turn, would lead to a different attitude toward work and the skills needed to do it well.

Some options for resolving the tank driver's dilemma

One might say a successful learning system would be one that would transform ideas in good currency at a rate commensurate with its own changing system. Delay would not be an option. Ideas in good currency represent immediate needs -- desires powerful enough for the formation of public policy (Schon 1971, 123-4).

If getting money appropriated is a test, ideas in good currency lately have included help for workers dislocated by automation and layoffs due to foreign competition, and an emphasis on education as a way to overcome scientific and technical skill shortages. The needs of America's veterans largely have gone unnoticed. It appears to have ceased being an idea in good currency. Public policy, for example, no longer seems to support the GI Bill or many of the other veterans assistance programs popular with the public for so many years following World War II.

To compensate some policy planners, as well as Employment Service staffers working with veterans in Job Service field offices, believe the solution is to find a way to make veterans' preference an idea that is in constant good currency -- an inseparable part of the learning system. While that is a worthy notion a successful outcome would be doubtful without public support (Schon 1971, 128-38). That is because good currency is a transient condition at best -- for instance,

jobs for minorities in the 1960s, an abandonment of the minorities with a loss of jobs due to defense cutbacks in the 1970s and a continuing erosion of the concern for minorities in the 1980s despite the many new jobs created by the Reagan administration's defense buildup. In many respects if employer practices are reliable indicators of public support the good currency idea supporting veterans services may have long ago gone out of favor -- LVERs and DVOPs report employers are not giving preference to veterans to any appreciable degree (SCOVE 1988b, 7).

Another idea often talked about is the notion that veterans preference should be mandated. The feeling is that legislators should force employers to hire veterans first, particularly those employers who have been awarded federal contracts. Just listing those jobs with the state Employment Service is not enough, they augue (SCOVE 1988a, 5-6).

Opponents concede first priority may be okay in interviewing, but not in the final decision of who to hire. That, they insist, should be a hands-off, management decision. Still, where veterans preference could (or should) be mandated, most agree would be in training opportunities, particularly those funded by the Job Training Partnership Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act, apprenticeship and vocational rehabilitation, among others (SCOVE 1988c, 5; IAPES 1989a, 18).

Regarding literacy training and skill development for the hapless tank driver, good sense tells us that more could be done by the DoD (and the various branches of the service) to "encourage" service men and women to go to school, both during their period of active duty (long before discharge), as well as during the military-separation process (SCOVE 1988d, 9; IAPES 1989c, 9). Publicity and promotion is one way to do that. Counseling is another. As the Secretary of Labor's Committee on Veterans Employment "Workforce 2000" report puts it:

> "The Department of Defense needs, within the Armed Forces, informational programs on employment opportunities and career guidance...which includes specialized services for nondisabled service members leaving active duty, those leaving active duty due to disability and retirees." (SCOVE 1988d, 9)

It also would seem sensible to require tank drivers (and others with similar military duties) to be reasonably proficient in reading, writing, and arithmetic -- pass a written literacy-based test before becoming eligible for the driver's license or the torpedoman's certificate. Similar incentives could create interest in other job skill training, particularly in support areas like using a computer and preparing reports. Even a requirement that all service personnel must be computer literate wouldn't be too outlandish for many military specialities in today's high-tech fighting environment (Goldstein and Fraser 1985, 38).

A few specific recommendations for improvement

Skill training appears to head the list of needs for veterans. Yet conservative critics say the nation cannot afford it. The cost is to high, both in terms of paying for (or providing) the instruction and spending the time to do it. Nonsense! Labor market projections show convincingly that the payoff would be worth the cost (Johnson and Packer 1987, 49). Positive results surely justify at least minimal investments.

Apprenticeship is another job-skill training possibility that should be more vigorously pursued between now and the year 2000. SCOVE's "Workforce 2000" report describes its use this way:

> "Apprenticeship...combines an actual private sector job with structured training, both on the job and related theoretical instruction off the job. It provides full journey worker wages after an agreed upon period of training. It provides skill training actually required by the private employer." (SCOVE 1988, 6)

SCOVE's "can-do" report also sets forth a six-point program to strengthen linkages between apprenticeship programs (administered by USDOL's Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training) and state Job Service veterans service providers (SCOVE 1988c, 7). More than 200 SCOVE work study participants, including IAPES Past-president Lee Gruhlkey of Texas (1974-75), agree; fully implemented, it would greatly enhance job-skill development for veterans. Missing until now has been the emphasis to do that.

Vocational rehabilitation offers still more training opportunities, particularly for the disabled veteran. Currently a VA program, it seems most logical that now is the time to press for more funding because of the VA's recent elevation to cabinet-level status (Department of Veterans Affairs). At the same time consensus also favors keeping the Veterans Employment and Training Service (formerly VES, now VETS) right where it is; collocated in most states with the state Employment Service agency -- thereby assuring continued close coordination (IAPES 1989c, 10).

Training for veterans should have more support from the business community. Without that emphasis skill training could be a waste -- newly trained veterans still might be without work. The National Alliance of Business encourages that involvement. In a published paper it suggests, "private employers must see training as essential to their productivity and to their competiviness." That means that while business already spends an estimated $30 billion a year on formal training, and many more billions on informal training, employers must recognize that existing workers will need both training and retraining to adapt quickly to new skill requirements (NAB 1986, 7).

Employers also need to become more aware of the nation's educational system and its training institutions. Both are deficient. Getting involved, NAB states, are "economic imperatives" as well as

social issues. America's competitive position in the world marketplace is at stake (NAB 1986, 16).

More attention also should be given to attitude. Suggested is a "simplistic" approach that means, as a nation, we ought not compromise on any of the so-called "excellence" elements described in the best-seller, **In Search of Excellence**. Written in 1982 as an investigation of why America's most successful companies "got that way," it concluded that what mattered most was service, quality, people and informality (Peters and Waterman 1982, 325). That means it is a way of thinking and relating to one's clients, like Sweetwater's Howard, who never met a veteran she couldn't accept as kin, and Brownsville's Hearn, who doesn't even try to understand a vet's lifestyle -- he just finds 'em work.

More community support is needed. So is state and national emphasis. In most instances that concern has been demonstrated by the various veteran organizations -- the American Legion; the Disabled American Veterans; the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States; American Veterans of World War II, Korea and Vietnam; and others. While their support remains vital, other community involvement should be solicited from members of an area's Private Industry Council and the local JTPA organization. Participants usually are business leaders and individuals representing state and local agencies concerned with workers and employment-related issues. Their help might be characterized as vital to the successful promotion, and subsequent acceptance, of veteran service activity.

Until recently, no national training facility or program existed for the providers of veterans services. Today there is one -- the National Veterans' Training Institute (IAPES 1989a, 18-19). It is recognized as "a proven and effective link to excellence" in veterans services nationwide. An IAPES work-study conference recommended that both Job Service and JTPA veteran service providers participate in NTVI's training programs.

A final recommendation supports the notion that the nation needs a plan that will help all veterans make a worthwhile contribution to the American way of life. SCOVE's "Workforce 2000" reports puts it this way:

> "As America approaches the year 2000, veterans in the labor force will fall into two categories: Vietnam era and post-Vietnam era. A national employment and training policy for veterans must be formulated which provides the flexibility required to meet the differing needs of the two groups."

SCOVE's report also suggests:

> "...in order to capitalize on increasing skills obtained in military service and to prevent the creation of future groups of unemployed veterans, this national policy should include pre-separation transition programs to assist all separating and retiring personnel." (SCOVE 1989, 27)

The National Alliance of Business refers to the need for labor market policy as "guidance for action." To prepare for the year 2000 NAB proposes a new employment policy to thoroughly examine old programs, discard the ones that don't work anymore and further identify what additional initiatives are needed (NAB 1986, 10).

The IAPES position on planning is well established. IAPES Veterans Committe chair for 1989-89, Charlie Brown of the Montana chapter, may have summed it up best in his "Welcome" to the conference, "Workforce 2001: A Veterans' Odyssey" held in Spokane, WA, in April, 1989. "Let us never forget," he wrote, "that we are all working to achieve the same goal: our veterans' right to equal opportunity in the world of work." Brown's "Odyssey" program was clearly a planning initiative.

Still, in retrospect, it would appear the most reliable veterans program asset remains the attitude of the Job Service people responsible for providing veteran services. Where a can-do spirit prevails, achievements often greatly exceed expectations. Limited resources need not be an excuse for retreat or defeat. America's veterans understand that. Most of them experienced it while serving in the military. Many dared to care. Most still do. Job Service staffers can learn from that, and so can the American people.

As the year 2000 approaches equity for all veterans should be the Job Service objective -- a decent job at good wages. That could resolve the tank driver's dilemma. It deserves to be a priority goal.

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Part III: local office programs

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Employment Security/Armed Forces network

by James F. Wallace

Maximizing Employment Security potential through Armed Forces recruitment can result in enormous beneficial consequences as the U.S. labor market confronts Workforce 2000. Department of Labor forecasters, supported by a Hudson Institute study, project radical changes in the distribution of population classifications. These projectionists warn it is not going to be job-placement business as usual within the next 10 years. However, many employers remain surprisingly complacent about the imminent worker deficit. "A lot of businessmen are accustomed to unskilled-labor surpluses," explains economist Anthony Carnevale of the American Society for Training and Development. "They treat these warnings as future-shock alarmism." Taxpayers from the baby-boom generation who have faced a seemingly endless line of job promotions, houses and schools, also have been slow to recognize the changes in the labor market.

Historically it used to be that an employee joined a company after graduation from high school or college and stayed on to receive a gold watch at retirement. It used to be that companies could select quality talent from an apparent endless sea of applicants.

James F. Wallace is a Local Veteran Employment Representative in the Colville, WA, local office of the Washington Employment Security Department. He holds an MA in special education and is working toward a doctorate in education.

'Used to be' doesn't apply

"It used to be" does not apply anymore. The reason is a profound demographic shift of seismic proportions that is reshaping the world's work force in terms of supply and demand. According to the Hudson Institute study, "Workforce 2000," the baby boom that has flooded the labor pools for the last 20 years is atrophying and, in fact, turning into what some have called a "birth dearth." Experts also note corporations cannot afford to ignore this trend during the next decade because the withering already has begun. The facts speak for themselves:

- Work force growth will decline to a mere 1 percent a year in the 1990s -- a far cry, indeed, from the vigorous 2.9 percent growth of the 1970s.

- Over the next decade the number of traditional entry-level workers, those 18-24 years old, will decline by a startling 20-25 percent. Making matters worse, the number of candidates who lack the education to qualify for skilled positions, or those eliminated by drug and substance abuse, further decreases the size of the entry-level labor pool.

- The Hudson Institute study notes dramatic population changes also are taking place. By the year 2000 white males, once the mainstay of the U.S. economy, will account for only 15 percent of the new job recruits. Women will comprise two-thirds of the new workers and an additional 20 percent will be nonwhite or immigrant men.

- All told, the business-affiliated Committee for Economic Development estimates that there may be a shortfall of more than 23 million American workers in the early 1990s.

Since these future labor market configurations will influence employee and business trends, it would behoove job-training and career-development administrators to institute a corrective plan of action immediately. DOL and the Department of Defense have the taxpayer's vested interest in assuring employment opportunities are available, whether it be to thwart a depression or to provide manpower for defense of our country. A creative marriage of these monolithic agencies would be a prudent step in preparing for Workforce 2000.

DOL and DoD training programs suggested

The rationale for citing DOL and DoD as priority federal agencies to actively participate in a unified national job-training/career-development effort is directly related to their common historical objectives. The DOL's Job Service's specific goal is to refer qualified applicants to the business community. The DoD Recruit Command is to encourage individuals to join the military service for training and career development.

Today's economic forces of supply and demand are being crunched by business' need for quality workers from a depleting trained-applicant pool. According to a recent **U.S. News and World Report**, labor market shortages are compounded by the fact that qualifications for middle- and low-wage jobs are rising even more rapidly than in the past. Obviously there is an urgent necessity to rectify this downward spiral. Currently this dilemma is akin to a very busy, hazardous intersection with no traffic signals. Unfortunately no one does anything until there is a serious accident. DOL and DoD, merging with the expressed purpose of developing a constructive networking plan, will establish a beneficial avenue thwarting a disastrous pileup at the corner of Workforce 2000.

To mobilize and redirect an entire labor market's course and to make a 180-degree turn from the status quo would require astronomical sums of money, creative thinking and much risk taking. What compounds this whole work force madness is that there are no years ahead to plan for changes -- there must be a plan of action implemented now. As the panic button is being pushed, leaders who are called on to prepare tomorrow's work force are scrambling madly for answers to who has the funding dollars, facilities, personnel, training and placement systems already established to handle this herculean task.

Adopting a networking process with ES and the Armed Forces Recruit Command contains all the necessary ingredients to soften the disastrous work force doom-and-gloom projections. Therefore, a conceptual analysis and assessment of ES and the Recruit Command's missions at this junction is not only prudent, but justifiable.

ESD and DoD profiles

The DOL's Employment Security system was crafted at the zenith of the Great Depression in 1933 when 13 million Americans were searching for jobs, Franklin Delano Roosevelt was assuming the presidency, and Frances Perkins was being named as Secretary of Labor. On June 6, 1933, Roosevelt signed the Wagner-Peyser Act into law, which initiated the creation of today's U.S. Employment Service and its mission of findings jobs for people and people for jobs. One of the purposes of Wagner-Peyser was to curtail job placement activities being performed haphazardly and competively by various agencies. Federal funds were appropriated then and greatly improved in 1950 with the adoption of the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA). Job Service grew to play a strategic and personal role in providing job placement service to clients in six major functioning areas:

- Placement activities,
- Employment counseling,
- Special services to veterans,
- Technical assistance and information for employers,
- Labor market analysis and information, and
- Community employment planning assistance.

It is through these functions that Job Service assists in stimulating the economy, thereby lessening the social and economic costs of unemployment.

During July, 1987-June, 1988, as an example, Job Service accomplished more than 4.3 million placements that included nearly 700,000 veterans, 1.5 million minorities, 1.7 million women and 1.3 million youth. More than 17 million applicants were provided some positive service, and of 6.85 million job orders, 4.3 million or 63 percent were filled.

The Job Service's national track record as a stabilizing economic contributor has been proven without question. Even with radical funding cuts this government employment agency has remained far above average in performance productivity.

The Armed Forces Recruit Command has changed dramatically its approach in obtaining clients for a military tour since WW II. This heavily tax-supported segment of the DoD now offers a selective service program. In other words there is no draft. The old cliche' popular during WW II, "you join the Army or go to jail," long has been buried. That mentality does not comply with today's highly automated Armed Forces. It is as competitive in providing training and career opportunities as the private-business sector -- sometimes even better. It already has made operational policy adjustments to meet the new-age social phenomena of society battling drugs and the explosion of women in the labor market. The military will not accept any drug abusers and performs random drug testing of its personnel. Also, its current 10 percent female enlistees will jump to 30 percent by the year 2000. Anticipating this female staffing increase, the Armed Forces has instituted both facility and job changes to meet this future need.

Military career advancement attractive

Current military career advancement, medical benefits and retirement programs are very attractive. Millions of taxpaying citizens have experienced military technical training and on-the-job-training. These learned skills were/are transferable to the private-business sector. Many metropolitan and rural areas have profited from the returning veteran. This vast, professional, sophisticated training institution has streamlined its work duty stations, which are comparable to any industrial technical firm of the corporate world. Last year 2 million enlisted, and during the October, 1987-September, 1988, period, 316,409 were discharged. These figures demonstrate the enormous tidal wave of persons being washed through a gigantic training machine, with the end product ready to land on the hard-rock labor market beach. The Armed Forces is, without a doubt, a cornerstone in the labor market's ability to maintain consistency in providing job training and employment.

In 1986 DOL issued Bulletin 8606 advising that all Job Service centers could receive placement credit for those whom they helped enter the Armed Forces, either by a job development or on an open job order. This memorandum opened the door wide for JSCs to increase their placement capabilities tenfold. Also, it provided the Armed

Forces a greater opportunity to utilize the local Job Service centers to enhance their recruitment practices.

It is common knowledge that a Job Service's performance rating of success is assessed on its job-placement activities and services provided. Auditors' criteria for measuring success is based on the number of job orders taken and by the number of clients served and placed. Similarly the Armed Forces Recruit Command's first priority is enlistments. It is evaluated on accomplishing quotas established by DoD.

Unfortunately, both government agencies reacted apathetically to this particular DOL announcement. The administrators of the state Employment Security agencies and Recruit Command's policymaking bodies did not realize the ramifications nor the magnitude of the impact such a directive would have on their operational agendas currently or on Workforce 2000. What follows is an understanding of how and why these two government entities, by networking efficiently, can build this country's work force into a state of job applicant readiness.

The client referral flow process

In the state of Washington, the Colville JSC has, since 1986, explored and experimented with networking with the Eastern Washington Armed Forces Recruit Command. One method is by direct involvement with the high school student soon to graduate, and the other is for veterans seeking career-enhancement programs and additional training.

The high school referral activity is initiated by a Job Service counselor's participating in a presentation of the JSC programs from Unemployment Insurance to placement activities, to resume' and oral interview techniques. Tours of the JSC are conducted, and the students are introduced to the Employment Security system. During the semester of instruction, job opportunities and training are revealed, and the Armed Forces is included and cited as an excellent training and career development employer. Professionals from the business communities are invited along with the recruiters to present their employment packages. Toward the end of the student's term, mock interviews are held in front of a panel of business entrepreneurs with recruiters also present. The student's resumé and oral interview are critiqued by the professionals. All are encouraged to register at the local Job Service for job-finding assistance.

Last year 12 seniors out of 120 were military bound. All were in the Delayed Entry Program and became registered with the Job Service for work while awaiting active duty. This relationship freed the recruiter from expending time assisting the recruit in finding work while awaiting entry. It also meant additional placements for the JSC. The implications of this high school student/Armed Forces/Job Service association on a national level is staggering. It was estimated that in 1986 the state of Washington inadvertently, without taking credit, placed some 300-400 clients in the military.

Washington ESD lost placements as do other states. Also in 1986, a random telephone survey was conducted with other Western SESAs and none of them had taken military placement credit nor were they familiar with Bulletin 8606.

Today it is customary at the Colville JSC to refer to the Armed Forces, Reserves, and the National Guard. One argument not supporting the military concept in this endeavor was that the young population will be "carted away" from the local labor market. That proved to be false. The majority of business operators in Colville are veterans, and they praised the Armed Forces for the training they received. In fact, the county's National Guard Unit, a state employer, provides the option of part- and full-time positions, which allows the individual medical benefits, post-exchange advantages, training and retirement. Recently a gentleman who worked at the Colville JSC as a project employee received a BA in business and now is employed in the personnel department of a local lumber mill. He now is a retired Army National Guard member at the age of 37.

The client-referral networking flow chart clarifies this process. What is dramatically clear is the fact that both SESAs and the Armed Forces are rewarded for their efforts, saving precious time and money. Most importantly, the taxpayer's investment has a tremendous payoff. In place is a system that is functionally sound, and offers training and career development opportunities in preparation for Workforce 2000.

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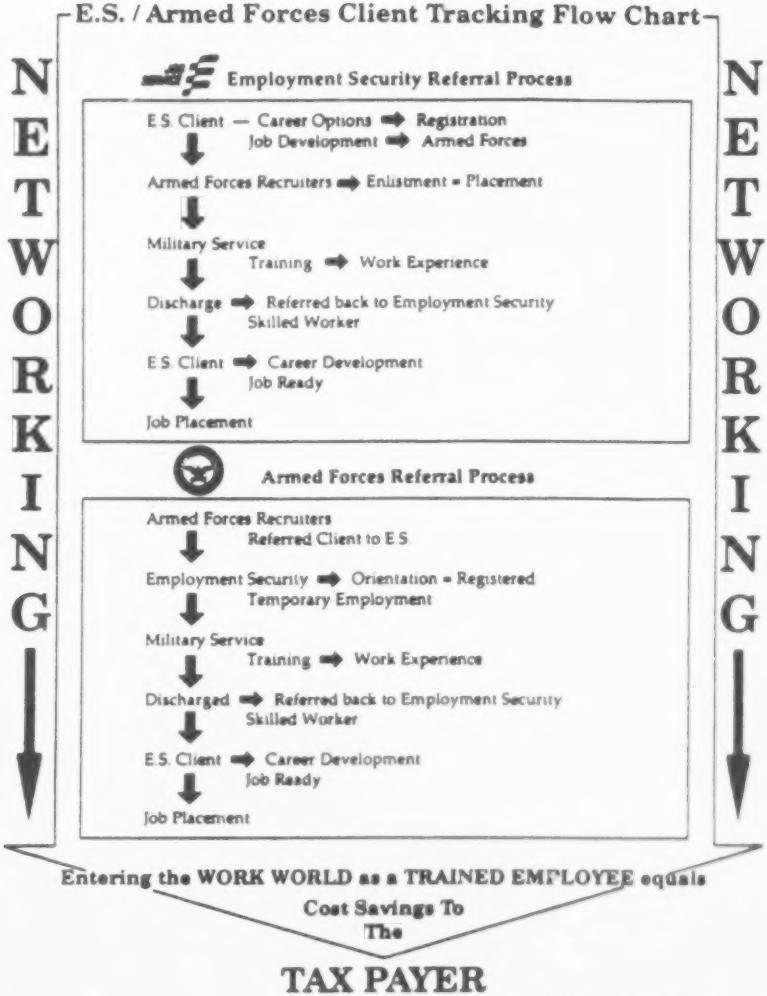
E.S. / Armed Forces Client Tracking Flow Chart
NETWORKING
NETWORKING
Employment Security Referral Process
E.S. Client — Career Options ➡ Registration
Job Development ➡ Armed Forces
Armed Forces Recruiters ➡ Enlistment = Placement
Military Service
Training ➡ Work Experience
Discharge ➡ Referred back to Employment Security
Skilled Worker
E.S. Client ➡ Career Development
Job Ready
Job Placement
Armed Forces Referral Process
Armed Forces Recruiters
Referred Client to E.S.
Employment Security ➡ Orientation = Registered
Temporary Employment
Military Service
Training ➡ Work Experience
Discharged ➡ Referred back to Employment Security
Skilled Worker
E.S. Client ➡ Career Development
Job Ready
Job Placement
Entering the WORK WORLD as a TRAINED EMPLOYEE equals
Cost Savings To
The
TAX PAYER
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The veterans representative and the Armed Forces recruiter -- an employment counseling approach

by Jorge B. Gonzales

Anyone involved in veterans employment programs or in dealing with veterans in their attempts to secure employment is familiar with Title 38, U.S. Code. This piece of legislation with all its changes and amendments, along with Chapter seven of the Wagner-Peyser Act, are the Local Veterans Employment Representative's and Disabled Veterans Outreach Program specialist's bibles. Their duties, responsibilities and even their actual job descriptions are found in these documents.

Wagner-Peyser mandates that veterans seeking assistance in finding employment through the various state Employment Service agencies be given preference in referrals on job orders over nonveterans. Title 38 mandates other employment-related services, such as counseling, be provided to this same group of individuals. It is not uncommon for these responsibilities to fall on the shoulders of the LVER/DVOP in the local office. For recently separated veterans leaving the Armed Forces, the LVER/DVOP play a major role in their assimilation into the civilian labor market.

Jorge B. Gonzales is a Local Veterans Employment Representative in the McAllen, TX, office of the Texas Employment Commission. He has worked as a placement interviewer, employer relations representative, and an Unemployment Insurance lead interviewer. He served in the U.S.M.C. as a commissioned officer during the Vietnam War. For the past 12 years he has been active in the Army Reserves and the Texas National Guard.

The LVER/DVOP in the SESAs have come far in their ability to handle the role of employment counselor. Thanks to the efforts of the National Veterans Training Institute and its excellent staff of instructors, the 1,600 LVERs and 1,886 DVOPs throughout the the United States now are receiving training in counseling techniques and case management. Although the majority of the veterans representative's counseling is employment oriented and intended to remove barriers to finding work, the LVER/DVOP still is playing the role of counselor. They must possess insight into the labor market and skills to extract from the veteran, through interviewing techniques, the information needed to guide the veteran in the quest for employment. The LVER/DVOP must be able to read both the labor market and the veteran's aptitude so as to point the veteran in the direction of the best employment opportunity. Individual veterans pose different situations to the LVER/DVOP. These may range from the veteran who needs no assistance other than Unemployment Insurance to the veteran who has no idea what to do once the military obligation is complete. The first veteran mentioned is the ideal situation. That person needs no counseling. The individual had the foresight to map out the future and desired career and planned accordingly. Military service was more than likely a stepping stone toward a goal. This person is well on the way to leading a productive and successful life. The second veteran mentioned is the one needing help from the veterans representative. That is the one we need to address in this treatise.

The 18 year old joining the military today does so for different reasons. It is proper of us to think it is because of a belief in country and what it stands for. These young Americans are grateful for what the government has done for or made available to them. They have a deep feeling of gratitude and desire to give a few years of young adulthood in return to help preserve that system of government.

A large number of enlistees are taking advantage of excellent educational opportunities the Armed Forces offers through the new GI Bill. The 300-percent interest rate of return Uncle Sam offers in the service personnel's educational fund would make any Wall Street financier green with envy. A young veteran leaving the military can be assured on discharge of a sizable amount of money for college or trade school. Additional income also can be depended on through the Veterans Administration Work Study program. Together, this amount can average a little less than $500 a month the veteran can use for educational purposes. This can further be increased by another $100 or so monthly if the veteran joins the Guard or Reserves.

The veteran who needs help is the one just out of the military with no skills other than those learned in combat arms and with no proceeds from the GI Bill. This veteran is ill-prepared for the civilian labor market. These individuals know where they are coming from, but have little, if any, idea as to where they are going. This veteran indeed tests the counseling skills of the LVER/DVOP. If the veteran's home town is in an industrialized center and good paying jobs abound, there will be a very good chance of finding both meaningful and rewarding employment. The veteran has a good chance of entering the civilian

labor market with ease. The LVER/DVOP will not counsel this veteran. However, in a nation as vast as ours there are many geographical regions known for their depressed economies and high unemployment rates. Good-paying jobs for the untrained and unskilled are few, and entrance requirements into them are very competitive. The LVER/DVOP must be a good counselor and case manager to help a veteran job seeker in these labor markets.

These points lead to the fact the Armed Forces recruiters underutilize the SESAs. Seldom do you see a recruiting poster at the local Employment Service office. The only time you see a recruiter there is if he drops off that poster you seldom see. For sure, the untrodden trail from the recruiting station to the local Employment Service office is such because the recruiter does not need our business. There are more prospects than needed walking into the office. This is a hint the LVER/DVOP should note. If any relationship is to develop it must be initiated by the veterans representative. The LVER/DVOP should begin the dialogue. As trained public-relations experts, again thanks in part to NVTI's marketing and accessing the media course, such a relationship should be easy to initiate.

You probably are wondering why the LVER/DVOP, who by regulation only should be concerned with veterans, wants to establish a relationship with the recruiter who deals with teenagers not yet veterans? You might even think the LVER/DVOP has no need to counsel with the young adult or teenager until after discharge. This belief is the culprit which has through the years hindered LVER/DVOP and recruiter cooperation. In fact, this belief is what fuels the problem a veterans' representative will inherit after discharge on the veteran's visit to the local office.

No civilian future

This young enlistee is the one who goes into a military occupational specialty in the Armed Forces for which there exists no civilian occupation. These are the combat arms personnel, the artillerymen, the sonar operators and the guided missile repairers who will find no demand for skills learned in the military. This young person becomes the unfortunate veteran who never was counseled at enlistment as to what to expect after discharge. This is the one who will go home to that depressed area of the country and wake up one morning to the fact of facing a very difficult time finding a good job. These individuals will realize they have been categorized as unskilled workers and have nothing to sell to the civilian employer. Even sadder is the fact they chose, three or four years ago, not to contribute to the GI Bill for education after discharge. By this time it is too late for anyone, either the recruiter or the veterans representative, to help. It is with this foresight in mind that the LVER/DVOP must start to include the Armed Forces recruiters in the list of friends. They, too, must by in the network.

A teenage recruit has too many things to think about during the first few days in the military. The recruiter has cluttered the mind with a number of things that will happen in the next few weeks and

months. There is boot camp. What is going to happen with the special friend back home. The last thing in mind is college and a career four years hence.

Still, the LVER/DVOP must not let this be discouraging. There is a chance to put some thoughts into this young person's mind. The LVER/DVOP must initiate a close relationship with all the recruiters in the area to impress on the recruiters that many veterans are having a hard time finding employment. The LVER/DVOP can tell the recruiters the problem lies with those veterans who are coming out with no marketable skills and with those who did not contribute to the new GI Bill. As mentioned earlier, those who acquired a marketable skill will have little trouble finding a good job. Again, the local economy will be a factor.

My experiences have followed a logical pattern. I noticed long ago the vast majority of veterans applying with our office were from the Army. The next highest number of returning veterans were from the Marine Corps. Very little representation existed from both the Navy and Air Force. I found from quizzing the local recruiters the latter two branches enthusiastically discuss the new GI Bill with all their recruits. These recruiters go to great lengths to explain the program and its benefits. The Army and Marine Corps recruiters only briefly touched on the educational opportunities. One can see the correlation here between the larger number of veterans we see in the Employment Service from the Army and Marine Corps and the lower number from the other two branches.

Local recruiters are not employment counselors. They were never intended to be such. They are doing their jobs according to their rules and regulations. The LVER/DVOP must step in to fill this void researching his files and finding from which branch the returning veterans visiting the office are being discharged. Particular attention must be paid to the military occupational specialities, and whether those veterans participated in the new GI Bill educational program. If the LVER/DVOP finds a relatively high number of veterans from a particular branch having problems finding employment, this situation must be addressed with that recruiter. I have found that most recruiters deal with their recruits for a long period of time before they actually leave for training. It is common for the recruiters to have different gatherings or functions for the recruits before they leave. What we do locally is get on their agenda during one of these functions and address the recruits as a group. This is when our counseling process begins, a full three or four years before the veteran applies for services with us.

What to say

The things to cover when the LVER/DVOP addresses a group of soon to depart recruits will vary depending on the local labor market. In our economically depressed area with little demand for skilled labor, our big push is for recruits to participate in the new GI Bill. During our presentation we touch on the high unemployment rate and minimal opportunities for unskilled laborers. We stress the worth of a

college education and how easy the military makes it for us to be able to get it. The use of figures such as pay rates and projected incomes over a period of time, when comparing the salaries of college graduates and non-college graduates, are big selling points. Our goal is to impress on the departing recruit to take advantage of all the educational opportunities available while in the service. We also stress military schools such as leadership-development courses and how they can help once discharged. The idea is to let the individual do the hitch in the service serving the county and come out in a better position than when he enlisted.

The local recruiters are very receptive to our assistance. They have found our talks informative and in no way detrimental to their recruiting efforts. The recruiters especially are pleased with the part of our presentation dealing with the possibility of reenlistment and perhaps making the military a career. We always make it a point that the departing service personnel understands our geographical area is economically depressed and jobs always will be hard to find.

This type of relationship easily can be initiated by the LVER/DVOP. It was easy for us in our local office because we always have provided the different Guard and Reserve units with referrals. Traditionally in our office we discuss the possibility of returning service personnel staying in the Guard or Reserves as a source of additional income and a way to retain their privileges. We have developed a bond with the recruiters.

I feel a strong relationship between LVER/DVOPs and the local recruiters should always exist. If such is not the case, much is being lost in a community. As mentioned earlier, some may view this time as nonproductive. It is obvious no credit can be taken by a LVER/DVOP for counseling or other services on applicants not registered. But we must bear in mind our jobs as LVER/DVOPs never have been one for which a quota can be set. Our jobs are intended to ensure the veteran receives all the services made available through Wagner-Peyser and Title 38. Whether we start the services on discharge or on enlistment should make no difference. We must never lose sight of the fact we are here to help our fellow veteran. By helping a young man or woman early in adulthood, the chances of that person leading a productive life will be greatly enhanced.

JTPA IV-C for veterans in Florida

by Dee Campbell

The Job Training Partnership Act (Public Law 97-300) is legislation permanently authorizing job training programs to targeted groups across the land. It replaced the controversial Comprehensive Employment Training Act program. The legislation gave states a larger role in determining how to serve their citizens. States have administrative and programmatic responsibility with a partnership of local groups, the majority of which is private industry.

The Act has five titles that could benefit veterans. Title IV-C is the Veterans Employment Program, which is under an allocation plan, designating 80 percent of funds distributed formula, with 20 percent SETAS discretionary funds. Title IV-C was modified in 1986 to include emphasis on serving handicapped and Vietnam-era veterans to ensure they have equal access to the appropriate JTPA programs.

At this time in Florida only four IV-C projects are operating because only four proposals were submitted. The projects are located in Pensacola, Clearwater, Fort Lauderdale and the Jensen Beach area, which places two on the east coast, one on the west coast and one in the panhandle. That is a good representation of the population distribution in Florida. The two projects to be highlighted are on the east coast, one in a single county and the other in a three-county partnership.

Dee Campbell is a Job Service manager in the Sarasota, FL, local office, Florida Department of Labor and Employment Security.

Treasure Coast Veterans Incentive Program

The Treasure Coast Private Industry Council consists of three counties: Martin, Indian River and St. Lucie. It is located between Cocoa and West Palm Beach. Due to a rapid increase in population, without proportionate economic growth, a high unemployment rate has been completed. In order to meet the needs of the veterans, the PIC created the Veterans Incentive Program, which would make an eligible veteran competitive in unsubsidized employment. An eligible veteran for VIP includes disabled, Vietnam and recently separated.

One of the unique features of Title IV-C is the veteran can be served without meeting the disadvantaged criteria; however, if a vet does meet the JTPA Title II-A guidelines, the individual must be served under that section. VIP offers employability skills, occupational skill training, job-search assistance and work experience. A 50-percent match is required. This is met by ensuring that an equal number of veterans are being served by Title II-A.

Some of the most viable features of the Treasure Coast plan are follow-through during the first 45 days of employment; supportive services such as transportation costs; and medical, dental and optical services. VIP has very good linkage with Job Service, county service officers and other related agencies.

The grant has very strict performance standards, one of which is very important for successful veteran service. A placement is not considered for payment until the participant has been on a full-time, permanent job for at least 45 days. The Treasure Coast Title IV-C program has surpassed the contract goals.

Broward County Operation Vets

The Broward County Employment and Training Administration has three office locations and uses three Job Service offices to accept applications. The main office is in Fort Lauderdale. BETA calls its program Operation Vets. It combines outreach with information and guidance, referral to training, and employment programs. Operation Vets serves the same eligibility group, with the disadvantaged going to Title II-A or other appropriate channels. The nonpoverty group go to IV-C, who are in turn directed to specially developed, on-the-job training or individual, customized training for occupations of high local demand. The veteran also receives the stock counseling, employment development planning, job search and referral assistance.

BETA has a good network system that is critical in times of short money and long demands. In most Service Delivery Areas there is a plethora of service available to provide everything from cradle to grave delivery systems. Title IV-C is only one avenue. The veterans' advocate must know who the partners are and how to access, utilize and perpetuate them for the benefit of the veteran client.

BETA has done well in fulfilling its IV-C obligations to veterans. Shelton Kemp, bureau chief of training, Florida Department of Labor and Employment Security, stated that of the total JTPA allocation to the state, Title IV-C amounted to only about one-half of one percent.

Kemp further stated that the red tape involved in getting Title IV-C created an extremely difficult effort for the small amount of money involved, but he is quite willing to do so because of his commitment to the veteran community. Unfortunately, with only four projects in the state, IV-C services are rather narrow.

Employment Service managers, SDA directors, Local Veteran Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans Outreach Program specialists should work together in formulating new projects that could be tailored to local situations. Many states are using Title II-A and IV-C for homeless veterans. Even if the funding is short, it is one more resource to fit into the puzzle to help deserving veterans replace their full potential. It is another way of saying, "I care enough to make a difference."

Reintegrating the homeless veteran through employment

by Joy Jenko

Leaving work, I acknowledge the old man who exists under the 16th Street bridge. Refusing to speak, his primary identifying feature is a tattered Army issue jacket he always wears.

Less than three blocks away is a group of Vietnam veterans, not at home enjoying family dinners after a good day's work but rather roasting potatoes over a make-shift exhaust grate and looking at a bitter war.

Tomorrow, walking downtown, I know I'll pass John panhandling on Smithfield Street. He'll also be wearing his fatigues, but his motivation to find a job vanished with his leg in Quang Nam in 1969.

The men described above are samples of Pittsburgh's estimated 3,000 homeless veterans. *(In this report, the word "homeless" is to be interpreted functionally. As was discussed at "Workforce 2001: A Veteran's Odyssey," the people described in this article are "veterans without homes.")*

Joy Jenko, MA, University of Pittsburgh, is executive director, Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program of Western Pennsylvania, Inc. VVLP is a career counseling and job placement corporation that assists all veterans in employment planning and placement.

To address the plight of these and others, the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program of Western Pennsylvania, Inc. has been selected as one of 15 agency sited nationwide to provide employment reintegration services to the homeless veteran. As a subcontractor of the Allegheny County Office of Veteran Services, VVLP received a grant from the Stewart B. McKinney Foundation (Veterans Employment & Training Service, Department of Labor) to operate the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project (HVRP), a program designed to reach out to and train homeless veterans in the job-search process, and to place them in gainful employment.

Who are the homeless veterans?

Western Pennsylvania has a sizable veteran population. In Allegheny County, the region surrounding Pittsburgh, one out of seven citizens is a veteran, with approximately two percent of these veterans being homeless.[1] While there is currently no definitive local data on the homeless veteran, it is estimated the one-third of all homeless people are veterans under age 40.[2] Females appear to represent a relatively small proportion. However, homeless veterans tend to remain homeless longer, have more complex problems and are more difficult to serve than the homeless population generally.

A large percent of the veterans in the Pittsburgh area were drafted before they had the opportunity to attend college. On returning from war (particularly the Vietnam war) many Allegheny County veterans returned to jobs in heavy industry. The subsequent decline in Pittsburgh's industry and the normal provision of seniority-based layoffs resulted in a significant number losing their jobs. (The Pittsburgh job market has changed in recent years from an unlimited number of service-related and high-tech positions.) Many veterans who currently are employed receive minimum or below average wages – a beginning step in the downward spiral leading to homelessness. In past years placing an application with a company resulted in a job within a week or two. The need to pursue a job by networking, resumes, applications and job search are unfamiliar techniques to the homeless unemployed. Many are unfamiliar with job-search techniques and require training to secure a position.

National and local studies emphasize the diversity of the homeless population and find that their characteristics vary widely from place to place. Overall, stages of loss usually include the loss of family, friends and finally community support.[3] In general there are three categories of the homeless: the chronically disabled, those experiencing personal crises and those bound by troubled economic circumstances.[4]

These categories overlap substantially:

1. The chronically disabled comprise the majority of homeless people. This group includes substance abusers and those with severe medical disability and mental illness.
2. Those homeless due to a personal crisis, such as being a victim of domestic violence or divorce, are commonly without a home for a temporary and relatively short time period.

3. Unemployment, eviction and the inability to find affordable housing are cited as economic circumstances that may result in homelessness.

The local job market, climate, accessibility to public transportation and other supportive factors are all variables that must be recognized when working with the homeless veteran.

One of the most common problems among homeless veterans is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.[5] PTSD is a cluster of symptoms brought on by an original reaction to a traumatic episode. Many veterans who suffer from PTSD have a feeling of distrust for others. They experience no sense of purpose or direction in life. PTSD symptoms, especially when associated with substance abuse, make it difficult to maintain employment and stability. PTSD treatment and counseling, along with job-search training, are important approachs to long-term employment retention.

Components of HVRP in Pittsburgh:

The Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program's HVRP project is designed to help the homeless veteran obtain permanent employment in positions that will substantiate their successful reentry into our communities. Once a veteran experiences a more comfortable lifestyle with a regulated daily routine, continuation of that lifestyle will last only if the foundation for it has a sound building and solid base. HVRP provides just such a structure.

The Pittsburgh HVRP program is operated primarily by three homeless veteran professionals: one program coordinator and two outreach peer specialists. Administrative support is provided by the project coordinator, the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program executive director, and the director of the Allegheny County Office of Veteran Services. HVRP serves the four congressional districts surrounding Pittsburgh, with operations focusing in Allegheny County and the city of Pittsburgh.

As employability professionals realize, it is not enough to have a homeless veteran attend a job workshop, compile a resume, interview and then obtain long-term job placement. It is often not that easy with even the most qualified client. HVRP, therefore, incorporates a detail supportive network of services and referrals that aid in the veteran's successful employment retention. HVRP's services may be summarized into three major program components: outreach, service assistance and referrals, and employment assistance and job development.

Outreach: Peer contact and counseling are effective and important segments of VVLP's HVRP program. The outreach peer specialists are veterans who have experienced homelessness themselves. They are assigned to contact homeless veterans at emergency programs, soup kitchens and in the streets. A common bond with other veterans is demonstrated to provide needed reinforcement to homeless veterans as they seek employment. A long-term relationship is estab-

lished between the veteran client and the HVRP outreach peer specialist. This relationship continues beyond job placement in order to provide the support needed for permanent reintegration into the world of work.

When properly selected, veterans who have experienced homelessness usually make the best outreach workers. Outreach peer specialists are effective when contacting homeless veterans and are usually successful when convincing the veteran to use services. The outreach peer specialists also are aware of the prevalent "street culture."

Service Assistance and Referrals: The HVRP Pittsburgh approach utilizes a case-management design that allows us to determine a complete profile of the veteran including family background, education, work history, financial status, physical and mental health, assessment and a work plan for complete reintegration. A ladder of effective programming is designed that is a match of veteran need to appropriate resource. The need for a timely response most often will help to reverse or correct the plight of homelessness. HVRP assessment of a veteran's needs requires the efforts of a multidisciplinary team, both internal and external, all coordinated by HVRP personnel. As a result the homeless veteran is able to move within a series of various structures and services in a manner commensurate with individual needs. If internal and external services to the veteran were not coordinated the veteran would be subjected to responding to a variety of systems that are intricately connected, but which he may not be able to fine tune to meet crucial needs.

The most critical and immediate need of the homeless veteran is adequate shelter. Since HVRP does not operate a housing program, all shelter for homeless veterans is done on a referral basis. Following the initial time spent on coordination with area shelters and single room occupancy units, this referral process has been successful. Once a veteran's immediate need for shelter has been met, every effort is made to secure SRO or low-cost housing for that individual to aid in long-term job retention and security. HVRP's linkages with other service providers include referrals for medical assistance, mental-health counseling, rent and utility assistance, emergency food assistance, legal aid and registration with the Pennsylvania Job Service. The Department of Veterans Affairs has been of considerable assistance through the local regional office, medical centers, and vet centers. HVRP personnel also participate in numerous local homeless coalition committees.

HVRP also provides the following direct services for the homeless veteran:

1. Public transportation to assist with job-search training inquiries. These bus tickets are allocated in increments no greater than five tickets per veteran and are not to exceed 35 tickets per veteran.
2. Vouchers (never cash) for haircuts, interview attire and emergency food. Once a veteran's employment is verified, vouchers also may be issued for specialized work attire, job-related

tools and housing assistance (i.e. portion of security deposit, utility deposit, etc.).

Homeless veterans may not benefit from any of HVRP's direct services (described above) without an initial intake procedure completed and a commitment of intent to find employment. All vouchers for special needs are approved by either the HVRP program coordinator or the VVLP executive director.

Employment Assistance and Job Development: Most homeless veterans are ill equiped to compete for jobs in the open market. In Pittsburgh it is important to work with employers to design jobs that will facilitate reentry into a job market where clients are apt to succeed. It is recognized that employers need the "right" employees, people who are qualified and dependable. VVLP's approach ensures that the employer is not asked to take an unreasonable risk when hiring.

The kinds of services provided to the homeless veteran are all inclusive and fall within the realm of career development. Once an assessment is made a work plan is established and implemented with the veteran's approval. All facts of becoming gainfully, permanently employed are addressed, as well as all facets of job retention. Although VVLP anticipates approximately 50 hours of service per participant, the length of time it takes to accomplish this will vary in accordance with individual needs.

The following program objectives summarize the Vietnam Veteran Leadership Program's regular job search procedures:

1. **Career counseling and needs assessment** -- A definition of the veteran's immediate needs and long-range goals is made. We first assist in determining a veteran's career objectives and then attempt to eliminate roadblocks to those objectives.
2. **Job-search workshops** -- In conjunction with the local vet centers, a three-day workshop is conducted that includes skill assessment, resumé writing, interviewing techniques and networking in the community, among other job tactics.
3. **Job clubs** -- These sessions are enabling mechanisms for sharing and receiving job leads. The job club provides veterans with an organized format, invaluable feedback on job-search techniques and emotional support.
4. **Direct job-search assistance** -- In addition to group formats, the homeless veteran also is offered one-on-one, direct placement assistance. A job developer will arrange interviews for veterans who are not able to do so on their own.
5. **Job-placement follow up** -- Post-placement follow-up is emphasized when working with the homeless veteran. A phone call to both the employer and the veteran after a job has been obtained eliminates potential problems and aids in employment retention.

Summary

The HVRP concept enables homeless veterans to get off the streets and find jobs. Truly the homeless-veteran crisis is not just an unemployment issue. Yet if gainful employment is not a part of the veteran's work plan, successful reintegration in the community is almost impossible. Job-search training accompanied by other supportive services is a workable planning design that we at HVRP Pittsburgh have found to be successful.

Although meaningful, long-term employment is the desired goal, many homeless veterans are not ready for immediate placement into such jobs. HVRP often recommends that some veterans establish a work history through temporary or lower-level jobs before pursuing permanent jobs. This allows veterans to become acclimated to a working environment if they have not been employed for a long time, or if they still are attempting to alleviate contributing barriers to employment. HVRP personnel remain in close contact with these veterans and continue to help them seek meaningful employment throughout their temporary assignments.

With regard to supportive services, veterans are confronted with many of the same needs and difficulties encountered by other homeless people. However, two factors make homeless veterans a unique client group.[6] First, many of them suffer from PTSD and require special treatment. Second, there are many resources -- such as financial benefits, medical and counseling assistance, and other services -- that are available only to veterans. Some veterans may face particularly acute problems, but there also are more resources available to help them.

Establishing linkages among the private sector, state and federal programs is a paramount necessity. No one agency can be everything for the homeless veteran. By connecting program initiatives with community resources they can be best served.

NOTES

1. Statistics courtesy of the Allegheny County Office of Veteran Services, 1988.
2. "America's Homeless Veterans," **American Legion Magazine**, p. 38.
3. Bauman, D. & Grigsby, C., **Understanding the Homeless: From Research to Action**, a report by the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, University of Texas, 1988.
4. **Homeless Assistance Programs**, a report by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, May, 1988.
5. Crandall, Jeffery C., **Jobs for Homeless Veterans Program: Evaluation Report**, a report developed and submitted by the Technical Assistance & Training Corporation, Washington, DC, October, 1988, p. 12.
6. Crandall, J.C., p. 39.

San Antonio homeless veteran placement project

by Arthur R. Underwood, Jr.

Early in 1986 the Department of Labor inquired through the Veterans Employment and Training Service about interest in participation in a Homeless Veterans Employment Program. The San Antonio local office of the Texas Employment Commission quickly replied to the DOL/VETS its desire to pursue such a project.

A program proposal was approved by DOL, and a grant was issued for $25,000 to initiate a test program in March, 1987. This money was used to hire two temporary interviewing clerks to contact the homeless veterans in San Antonio and extend employment services. These two veterans had experience working with homeless and day laborers. One of the two had experienced a homeless situation.

Analysis of the homeless situation in San Antonio pointed to the Salvation Army Shelter, the San Antonio Metropolitan Ministries shelter, the Vietnam Veterans Center and the halfway houses as appropriate outreach service points. One outreach worker was assigned to the Salvation Army and the VET Center. The other outreach worker covered the SAMM Shelter and the halfway house

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Arthur R. Underwood, Jr., is supervisor, special veterans programs, with the San Antonio Region of the Texas Employment Commission. He retired from the U.S. Army in 1971 and holds degrees from the U.S. Military Academy and St. Mary's University.

used by the Veterans Administration for the concluding phase of its "chronically mentally ill homeless veteran recovery" program. This is a transitional housing situation with primary emphasis on employment.

The Homeless Veteran Employment Program extended from March 16, 1987-March 15, 1988, and required certain data be reported. Reportable items and results obtained are:

1. Number of responsive contacts, 204.
2. Number of placements in treatment or counseling programs, 110.
3. Number of enlistments in job training activities, 25.
4. Number of job placements, 74.
5. Number of job placement still in jobs after six months, 5.

The only goal set by Texas Employment Commission for the Homeless Veteran Employment Program was attainment of 25 placements. The exact nature of the placements was not specified. Our placements did surpass that goal.

While this program was successful, it really was a learning experience. We learned that it was necessary to get the homeless veteran into shelter first and then have the basic needs of food, clothing and medical attention addressed. Only after all this has been addressed can we help with employment.

The Homeless Veteran Reintegration Project

The Homeless Veteran Reintegration Project was approved as a successor project. It ran from Aug. 1, 1988-July 31, 1989. Final approval was not received (with permission to act) until Sept. 15, 1988. Included in the funding for HVRP were monies for two new homeless veterans as outreach caseworkers and another as a carryover from our earlier program. This has enabled the provision of continuous outreach service at the Salvation Army, the SAMM Shelter, and the Vietnam Veterans Center. The halfway houses are served as an extension of the service at the VET Center.

The program now has Computer Terminals with direct access to the Texas Employment Commission Employment Service Job Bank. Outreach caseworkers enter applications, conduct job searches and enter referrals directly into the computer. Job development, counseling and supportive services are tracked, verified and updated on each visit and contact with the homeless veteran.

An important service for employers is the certification of the veterans for employment eligibility to meet the Immigration and Naturalization Service requirements. The homeless have minimal documentation. Most have lost (by being mugged) whatever ID they might have had. If the Veteran has a DD-214, or any other identifying document, the caseworker can help with applications for replacement of Social Security card, driver's license, whatever. If the veteran was born in Texas the Texas Veterans Commission will secure a copy of the birth certificate through the appropriate County Veterans Affairs Office.

Funds are used to defray cost of such essential items as state-issued identification cards or drivers licenses. We buy glasses, batteries for hearing aids and steel-toed boots. We have bought more than $500 of bus tickets to get our homeless veterans to and from job interviews and work. (During the HVEP we bought $283.90 of bus tickets with money received from recycling aluminum cans.) The shelters permit veterans gaining employment or "actively" seeking employment an extended stay. This permits the homeless veteran to establish equity. The shelters required a portion of wages be placed in a savings account to ensure the savings objective is met. When ready for independence the San Antonio Community Assistance Program will pay for deposit, first month rent and utility turn-on.

Who are the homeless?

Who are these homeless? Where have they come from? Each time we visit with a homeless veteran we complete a contact form. On the initial contact we attempt to get basic data relating to age, social unit (single, married, divorced, etc.), education, benefit status (Food Stamps, VA benefits), how long since in own residence, how long in San Antonio and where from. We also record sex and ethnicity. The information noted on these contact sheets is entered into a computer operated by a community welfare agency.

Each of our homeless veterans has an individual story of events bringing on the situation that created the homeless status. The factors include money; drugs; alcohol; loss of family, job and home; etc. A homeless person's flight may be in search of a better chance for work, better family situation or escape from those seeking payment of debts.

It includes flight from legal prosecution for nonpayment of child support. When we get a driver's license for one of our homeless veterans, the Department of Public Safety runs a computer check. One of our clients now is the guest of a nearby county; however, the veteran does have a job waiting for him on his release. About 15-20 percent of those who have asked for such assistance (ID or driver's license) decide to leave before visiting the Texas Department of Public Safety.

While some homeless obviously travel extensively back and forth across the country, it would appear that a large percentage stay relatively close to home. An individual is homeless if a nighttime residence is a public or private shelter or if the person sleeps in a public or private space that is not designed for nighttime residence. The city estimates that there are 12,000-16,000 homeless in the San Antonio area. Statistics at the shelter indicate that about one-quarter are veterans. We estimate there are 3,000-4,000 homeless veterans to be served by our caseworkers. For every good contact made, we experience five-six contacts that are nonresponsive, i.e. these contacts are not interested in changing their lifestyle.

A sampling of a little over 50 percent of our client intake indicated that the average homeless veteran we assist is an Anglo, single, high school graduate and was living in Texas at the time he became homeless. The odds are one in three that he was living right here in San Antonio. Finally 44 percent of the homeless veterans seen by our

caseworkers are seen within the first month after arriving in San Antonio. Our statistics do not break down time to less than a month; however, we know from our interviews and from shelter management that we are seeing most of the homeless veterans on his or her first day at the shelter.

Results

The program asked that twice as much information be reported as was required before. Additionally we were asked to establish end-of-year goals for each item. These goals were established based on the HVEP activity and were considered challenging but obtainable. Some of these were not under our direct control and could not be achieved. The results are positive.

Item 1 -- The number of outreach contacts varies with the time spent in the shelters. While contacts are made there by far the majority are accomplished on the streets, in the bushes and under bridges. This requires acceptance of the caseworkers by the homeless veterans as member of their sociological group. Only then do we have a chance to offer the shelter, food, clothing and medical attention that is needed. Goal: 1,000 contacts. Total: 1,126, or 112 percent.

Item 2 -- Client intake refers to those veterans we put into the Employment Service system and are provided job referrals, job search counseling and job development. Goal: 450 intakes. Total: 443, or 98 percent.

Item 3 -- All clients entered into our system are provided service. It is our interpretation that this item is the same as the number of client intakes. Goal, total and percent are the same as Item 2.

Item 4 -- Referrals to supportive services include the shelters, medical and dental attention not available in the shelter clinics, legal services, Veterans Administration programs such as the "chronically mentally ill homeless veterans" program, Food Stamps, and more. All homeless are considered "economically disadvantaged" for our program and may be eligible for Targeted Jobs Tax Credit certification. Our supportive service referrals far exceeded our assumed goal. We referred our clients to every service for which they may be qualified. Goal: 400 referrals. Total: 574, or 143 percent.

Item 5 -- Referrals to employment and training services include job training, on-the-job training and job search skills training. Goal: 260 referrals. Total: 307, or 118 percent.

Item 6 -- Number placed into unsubsidized employment refers to homeless veterans placed in permanent employment and not eligible for or receiving governmental support in addition to their wages. The caseworkers were quite successful in placing the homeless veterans in permanent employment. Unfortunately, we still have to rely on the homeless veteran's individual desire to stay on the job. Goal: 100 placements. Total: 111, or 111 percent.

Item 7 -- Assisted placements are those that the homeless veterans obtain after receiving service from the HVRP but not as a direct result of an HVRP referral or job-development contact. These placements were not an item over which HVRP exercised any direct control. We

learned about them indirectly. We attempted to maintain close contact with the homeless veteran on the job search. It often was very difficult. Goal: 50 assisted placements. Total: 38 verified, or 76 percent.

Item 8 -- The number who retain their job for 13 weeks was tracked following employment of homeless veterans by personal contact with the veteran and the employer. We provided supportive service to the homeless veterans even after employment. We possibly provided bus tickets for travel to work, protective shoes or glasses -- whatever was needed to support the homeless veteran in the newfound employment. Goal: 25. Total: 27, or 108 percent.

Item 9 -- The rate of placement is determined by dividing the total placed (sum of items 6 and 7) by the number served. Our objective was to place, with or without help, one-third of the total homeless veterans served. This was our biggest challenge. The more homeless veterans served, the more difficult it was to accomplish this goal. Goal: 33 percent. Results: 33 percent.

Item 10 -- The average wage at placement is computed by averaging the starting wages of all homeless veterans entering permanent employment. As homeless veterans were placed in better paying jobs, the average wage improved. Goal: not established. Result: $4.76 per hour.

In addition, 445 homeless veterans were placed in some type of job, including day labor. This is the first step on the road to reintegration.

Conclusion:

1. HVRP is a successful DOL/VETS program assisting homeless veterans into employment and providing a means for them to leave the "street-life."
2. HVRP is accomplishing a great deal for the relatively small amount funded.
3. HVRP can be implemented on some scale with very little, if any, additional funding and personnel by ES offices throughout the United States.

The major need of the homeless veteran not currently being adequately satisfied is transitional housing. We can get the homeless veteran in the barracks housing situation of the shelters. We can, with the help of the City of San Antonio Community Assistance Program, move the homeless veteran to an independent living situation in an apartment. There exists a need for "transitional" housing in between the complete regimen of the shelter and the complete freedom of independent apartment living. San Antonio will partially solve this with the conversion of a former Veterans Administration building into combination shelter, medical clinic and single-room-occupancy housing for the homeless reaching that transitional state.

The best proof of the success of the San Antonio Homeless Veteran Reintegration Project is it was refunded for another year at $100,000 plus carryover funds. Based on our previous experience, we expect to exceed more ambitious program goals in the next year.

Compensated work therapy

by Peggy Black and David Knapp

Unemployment affects almost all individuals in the labor market at some time. It is highly stressful and has been associated with diminished psychological well being. People may become hostile, depressed, anxious or lose self-esteem. It also can cause psychosomatic disorders such as headaches, increased back problems, lack of energy and enthusiasm, lack of concentration, and general dissatisfaction. Studies link increased alcoholism, divorce, crime and suicide to unemployment. When the job loss was involuntary from a plant closure or job phase-out, increased heart attacks, strokes and high blood pressure have been found. This is due, in part, to the individual perceiving loss of control of their life and life situation, and stress caused by the unknown. Increased stress also has been found as one of the most common precipitators of child abuse.

Peggy Black is a Human Resource Specialist II, Disabled Veterans Outreach Program, Kansas Department of Human Resources. She is a graduate of Washburn University, Topeka, KS, with a B.A. in psychology. She served in the Air Force.

David W. Knapp is a Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist in the Compensated Work Therapy Program, Colmery-O'Neil Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Topeka, KS. He is a graduate of Wichita State University, Wichita, KS with a B.A. in industrial education. He served in the Army.

The hostility syndrome

People who work with the unemployed have seen many of these symptoms. The client will be hostile toward everyone, believing they are not receiving enough service. They may be so depressed you hate to send them to see an employer, or so desperate that an employer is unlikely to hire them. The perception that they have no control over who hires them or what they are going to do gives way to a perceived lack of control over other phases of their lives. Many people define themselves by the type of work they do. When they lose their job and are unable to find another immediately, they lose their centers -- who and what they are. If a client has held the same job for several years and it is phased out through technological change, the individual may be older and probably needs retraining. That individual is used to a standard of living a new job cannot realistically support. These individuals are hostile about having to take a job for less money, in an area they may know little or nothing about and feel they are too old to be sent to school since that is for "kids." They also may not have graduated from high school or completed the General Education Development requirements.

Those with a history of mental disorders, mental retardation and physical disabilities are generally the last hires and the first let go. When they become unemployed it may be more difficult to get another employer to hire them due to employer prejudices toward people in these groups and their own lack of diversity of skills in several different areas of a given work situation. Many employers are unwilling to hire disabled individuals because they are not aware of the technology and resources available to make work areas accessible. Also, there are currently fewer financial incentives available.

As the time an individual is unemployed increases to several weeks or months, that person may start developing problems with perceptions of situations, especially if self-worth always has been defined by the type of employment. The individual develops a perceived lack of control over all aspects of his life. Since he has no job he believes he is of no use to anyone, and he may exhibit a full range of emotions, even within a single interview. Helping this individual find a job then becomes not so much a matter of telling him, "Here's a company who is hiring and why don't you go and apply," to "You may not have as much control over this one aspect of your life as you would like, but what about the parts you do?" For example, it may be necessary to suggest: "You can decide where to apply for work and what you say in the job interview." The individual has much less control over who will ultimately hire him.

Therapeutic veterans work programs

One way the Veterans Affairs Medical Centers have addressed the situation of helping veterans become productive again is through the Compensated Work Therapy program. It is a form of sheltered workshop for inpatients and outpatients that closely simulates a workplace situation. The program provides real work, with standards

and time frames that must be met per the requirements of binding contracts. Within each hospital the CWT staff contracts business from community employers. The type of work can vary widely, taking into consideration the potential limitations of the veteran population needed to complete the task. The veteran is paid a per-piece rate for each step of a given job based on the federal minimum wage. The individual therefore has more control over how much is earned since it is directly tied to individual productivity. Although actual business practices are used to simulate normal working conditions, the prime objective is the therapeutic value derived from working.

The therapeutic objectives of the Compensated Work Therapy program are:[1]

A. To provide for the psychosocial or physical rehabilitation of the participants.

B. To induce motivation, heighten self-esteem, create new interest and break institutional patterns through the use of remunerative work with the expectation of either increasing the patient's potential for adjustment to the community or preventing regression from the present functional level.

C. To reinforce through the use of monetary rewards modifications or development of attitudes, habits, skills and behaviors necessary to attain or maintain a maximum level of social, psychological and vocational adjustment.

D. To create a realistic everyday-life working environment conducive to the development of work tolerance and effective learning of acceptable work habits and skills.

E. The quality of life for those veterans not able to function in a competitive work force can be considerably increased through a meaningful work experience.

F. Work adjustment can also be accomplished in this area. Because of the large variety of jobs performed and skill level required in the CWT Program, job exploration and work adjustment are possible.

Since the CWT program primarily involves production work it is not therapeutic for all patients. A two-week trial is set up to evaluate the appropriateness of the placement. At the end of this time the staff and veteran determine whether the program will fulfill the clients treatment goal or whether other placement is recommended. Once it is determined to be appropriate, the following evaluation and follow-up is done.[2]

1. Participants are evaluated by the appropriate professional staff element at regular intervals, but not less often than every three months, in order to determine readiness for discontinuance from the program or to adjust the therapeutic regimen. Written reports of such evaluation are to be documented in the participant's medical record.

2. The participant is discontinued from the CWT program when any of the following occurs:

a) Treatment team determines that the participant no longer needs or will receive no additional benefit from CWT activities.

b) The participant produces close to the standard time rate for a period of four consecutive months.

c) Participant's production ranges from 50 percent close to the standard time rate for a period of one year.

d) In the case of participants with production consistently below 50 percent of the standard time rate, determination may be made by the appropriate professional that the participant has achieved a maximum level of functioning in the program, but is potentially employable in the open labor market at other types of employment or is capable of adequate adjustment in a noncontrolled environment.

e) The purpose for which participation under the VA vocational rehabilitation program (38 U.S.C. Chapter 38) was authorized has been achieved.

3. The above criteria may not apply if the appropriate professional staff member determines that continuation in the program is essential to prevent physical or social-psychological regression or institutionalization.

4. Continuance in the program is for therapeutic purposes and no individual is to be retrained in the program to meet production needs.

The CWT Program at the Colmery-O'Neil Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Topeka, KS, has two full-time staff. It currently averages 50 veterans working at any given time. It has approximately 85 assigned. The CWT program has contracts with various large corporations in the community. They have several jobs under contract through the middle of 1990.

In 1988 there were fewer veterans in the CWT program. About 300 veterans came through the program. Of those, about 40 percent left after having secured regular employment. Of the remainder some left the area, some are still with the program, some returned home after completion of inpatient treatment and the whereabouts of some are unknown.

Predictability of work available has been an ongoing concern of many sheltered workshops and CWT programs. It is difficult to maintain continuity between the staff and workers due to the lack of continuous work available. Passage of Section 89 of the Internal Revenue Code which is part of the Tax Reform Act of 1986 (P.L. 99-514), governs benefits of part-time workers and has resulted in an increase of work for most sheltered workshops and CWT programs in the area. The Medical Center also has partially solved this concern through the signing of several long-term contracts. It is currently working on projects that take up all available space, and the staff has considered looking for additional space off station to increase its capacity.

The CWT program cannot be involved in primary manufacturing. The program may manufacture products only if contracts exist for sale

of the products. This reduces the inventory and storage costs and the need to sell the product once it is finished. With the consumer market changing rapidly funds cannot be tied up in products that may not sell.

Search for permanent solutions

Since the CWT program is not a permanent solution to unemployment, several other programs within the VA Medical Center exist to assist and support the veterans in obtaining permanent employment. The Educational Therapy Department assists with GEDs, resumes, and job-skills training. There also is a VA Vocational Rehabilitation Office to assist veterans eligible for Chapter 31 vocational training and schooling, and the local Job Service center has a representative at the Medical Center two days a week. The goal is to get everyone who is capable into unsupported work in the community.

The CWT staff have discussed establishing a group job search two or three times a week to address employment and job-search concerns. It has not started anything due to the limited number of full-time staff. The staff believes it would enhance the program as as whole. In research with unemployed auto workers it was found workers were better able to hear and utilize the job-search information from peers than from staff and professionals.

The CWT program is not an answer for all veterans. It works well for those who will look for production and warehouse work. It requires intensive staff involvement to give the veterans the best chance of success. The Medical Center staff that is involved with the CWT program encourages success and performance at the highest level attainable to the veterans. The support given has made it possible for a select group of unemployed people to feel better about themselves and either go on to unsupported work or at least function at a more confident level. As cutbacks in other areas such as the Veterans Job Training Act occur, the CWT program is able to assist in giving veterans relevant training while also providing income and other needed services. It also can provide a recent work history for those veterans who have been out of work for an extended period and help improve confidence needed to attain other employment.

With the rising cost of health insurance and government supported medical care, as well as the cost of the Unemployment Insurance program, any program that will assist in work readiness is essential. The physical and emotional cost to family members is well documented. It ultimately will be through programs such as the Colmery-O'Neil VA Medical Center's CWT program that some veterans will be best helped.

Footnotes

1. *Colmery-O'Neil VA Medical Center, Topeka, KS, Memorandum 84-33 (117), March 22, 1984.*
2. *Department of Medicine and Surgery, Veterans Administration, Washington, D.C. 20420, Part VIII, "Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Service," VA Department of Medicine and Surgery Manual M-2, "Professional Services," Change 3, July 2, 1981.*

The Texas job-search seminar counseling connection

by Don Watson

The need for veterans to change jobs has increased dramatically in the past decade. There are many varied reasons for this trend, such as plant closings, new technologies, mergers, elimination of certain jobs and regional economic trends. Overall, current veteran job seekers are finding an increasingly competitive job market. Today's veteran job seeker may be fully trained to do a job, but in many cases is totally unprepared to look for a job.

In Texas one answer to this basic problem has been the Job-Search Seminar. This seminar consists of approximately 20 hours of intensive job-search training, and it is broken down into four basic parts as follows:

1. The job seeker
   - A. The personal and family effects of unemployment
   - B. Self Evaluation
   - C. Goal setting
   - D. Resume writing
2. The job campaign
   - A. Telephone communications
   - B. Ad matches
   - C. Employment information sources

Don Watson is a Local Veterans Employment Representative in the Wichita Falls, TX, office of the Texas Employment Commission. He oversees three local office veterans' programs for a 15-county region of North Texas.

3. The job interview
   A. Dressing for the interview
   B. Interview conduct
   C. Frequently asked interview questions
4. Keeping that new job

Training is done with videotapes and a workbook, with exercises for each participant. The entire package is facilitated by a veterans' representative. The classes and supplements result in an applicant who knows the type of job wanted, and more importantly, produces a more motivated, confident applicant.

Cafeteria-style approach

One of the main advantages of the program is its cafeteria-style approach. Professional, semiskilled, or entry-level job seekers can benefit from this seminar. Each is able to select the portions of the seminar that pertain to personal work search and to adapt the suggested techniques to a personal level of job search. This program is providing a much needed skill to the veteran clients served.

In our office we are using these seminars with selected veteran client groups. These include retirees, substance-abuse dischargese, medical board separatees, and regular three-four-year enlistees who will be reentering the civilian labor market. In addition to the normal workshop information, the seminar is expanded to include information on veteran-specific programs such as Veterans Administration Vocational Rehabilitation, the Job Training Partnership Act, the GI Bill, the Veterans Educational Assistance Program, the Veterans Job Training Act and Unemployment Compensation information. Area labor market information and other specific information on local programs are available for those remaining in our geographic area.

From these job-search classes those who are not job ready because of unmarketable military skills, genuine career changes or other major employment barriers can be identified for intensive individual employment counseling. The starting point in such cases is usually the General Aptitude Test Battery. Tests results, coupled with an interest checklist, usually provide a common starting point for the veteran and the veterans employment representative. By using these tools along with other resources such as the **Occupational Outlook Handbook, Guide for Occupational Exploration** and the veteran representative's knowledge of local job markets, the veteran applicant can identify strengths and avoid weaknesses. At the same time the veterans' representative can expose the client to special programs as needed (e.g., vocational rehabilitation, JTPA programs, VJTA, Targeted Jobs Tax Credit, etc.) as well as regular Job Service placement efforts.

During the employment counseling process it is very important to stress that the applicant set realistic goals for himself. Since many of our veteran clients have had limited or no civilian labor market contact in several years, it is vital that they are given good basic information to help develop long- or even short-range goals. Realistic

data available through the Job Service can include, but is not limited to, open current job orders, closed job orders, wage averages for specific occupations, hiring requirements, licensing (if required) and the competition (other real applicants with skills, education and experience) the veteran will face through the Job Service placement system.

Once a career decision is made, the veterans' representative has gained permission to assist the veteran in the local labor market. The veterans' representative needs to remain aware of office limitations and boundaries and accept that the true responsibility for change lies with the applicant. Successful job placement may require a major readjustment of the veteran's life style, expectations, educational plans or other areas that are affected by one's occupational choice.

A real-life example

An excellent real-life example of this process is David Miller (pseudonym). Miller registered in our local office in May, 1988. This 41-year-old veteran was a successful radio broadcast engineer with 18 years experience. He originally had been trained in this field in 1970 by VA vocational rehabilitation. The veteran was unemployed because of advances in technology and a shift in the job market. Full-time broadcast engineers are being replaced by on-call contracted broadcast engineers because of vastly improved equipment reliability and easier maintenance.

The veteran was given basic Job Service counseling on his first visit and was referred to several supportive services available in the local area. He was given the information regarding the local federal Small Business Administration programs to help him explore the possibilities of establishing his own business as a radio broadcast engineer contractor. This approach was taken to utilize his 18 years of experience. In addition, because of worsening leg impairment (40 percent service-connected disability), Miller also was receptive to the idea of possible retraining by the VA through their vocational rehabilitation program.

A local JTPA program for dislocated workers under Title III provided Miller with his Job-Search Seminar. The local LVER used the GATB and its interpretations to assist Miller with establishment of job goals in the local area. Through regular Job Service placement activities he was referred to several electronic repair and technician jobs that were available out of town. He also was referred to federal openings with the Voice of America in Washington, DC.

To meet short-term goals, Miller was referred to a full-time job as a census enumerator for the U.S. Department of Commerce. This position provided him with supplementary income and removed him from the unemployment roles.

At this point, Miller still was pursuing his primary work goal of reentering the radio industry. Through techniques learned in the job-search program, he located work as a broadcast engineer with a new radio station in the area. He still is interested in self-employment or federal employment and is continuing inquires in these areas.

This entire process covered five months of work through the local veterans' section of the Job Service. It shows dramatically the blend of local and national programs that can be used successfully with veteran applicants. The JTPA Title III program provided the Job-Search Seminar and other additional services. The preceding five-month effort was a success because of the individual veteran's willingness to face his situation and select possible solutions. It was the job of the veteran's counselor to do the following:

A. Gather relevant information,
B. Clarify the problem,
C. Assist in setting realistic, attainable goals, and
D. Provide positive re-enforcement and positive feedback.

These four basic responsibilities of the counselor may be expanded into many other areas and needs, but they are essential to the maintenance and facilitation of the counseling process in the Job Service situation. The job-search and counseling approach to veteran clients is an extended, time-consuming effort, but for the selected veteran applicants it is the most effective combination available to the local Job Service veterans' representative.

Vocational Information Profile: innovations in employment counseling

by Kenneth D. Freeman

In 1946 a policy known as the "Six Point Program" was enacted by the Secretary of Labor. The second point of this program called for Employment Services to assist applicants of employable age to make sound vocational choices in light of their present or potential abilities and interests.

During the second quarter of 1988 the Oklahoma Employment Service conducted a special pilot project in Employment Service counseling using one of the newest innovations in computer technology. It is called the Vocational Information Profile. This computer software has the ability to integrate clients' test scores from the General Aptitude Test Battery with their greatest to least desirable interests as measured by the U.S. Employment Service Interest Inventory.

The lack of staff time available often has been a prohibitive factor in providing Employment Service counseling. With the increasing numbers of displaced workers and simultaneous reduction in Employment Service staffing levels, VIP may indeed prove to be a cost-effective means of service delivery.

Kenneth D. Freeman is a Disabled Veteran Outreach Program specialist II in the Oklahoma City, OK, Northside local office of the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission. He is the VIP pilot project coordinator.

This new innovation in Employment Service counseling was tested on 95 veterans currently experiencing full unemployment, three public administrators from agencies outside the OESC, two OESC personnel, and one applicant selected to provide a sample measurement of accuracy in comparison to expressed occupational and industrial goals. The results of the project as compared to other current workshop and individual counseling programs are:

1. Employment Service counseling is broken down into three categories: job choice, job change and job adjustment. Under the job-choice category VIP successfully demonstrated the ability to relate aptitudes to specific fields of interest. Not only were profiles unique to the client's interest, but it effectively and chronologically combined high aptitudes by industry area to each subsection of the industrial area.

Under the job-change category VIP effectively opened clients' eyes to new directions in the work force by providing exact occupational areas of potential pursuit by comparing the clients' aptitudes to specific aptitudes characteristic of occupations within the area of Industrial Interest.

Although VIP is not programmed for job adjustment counseling assistance, it has the ability to assist the counselor in identifying low areas of aptitudes or interests and where a client previously has been employed, thus identifying hypothetical causes for the lack of job satisfaction and low potential for job longevity. Many clients, when presented with new directions, displayed changes in self-perception, attitude, and exhibited a higher level of solution-oriented behavior.

2. The cost factor indicates VIP, when compared to the GATB/VG program currently used, may save the agency valuable staff hours worked in reference to the research necessary to prepare a proper vocational profile. A copy of the time and staffing analysis is included in this report.

3. The uses of this program also can be of great assistance to the State Automated Referral system currently employed in Employment Service operations. Because VIP has the ability to classify interests and aptitudes from greatest to lowest areas, it can assist the job-placement interviewer in selecting the best candidate, by aptitude or job-family percentile, but also by level of interest. Validity Generalization does not have this capability. The effectiveness of VIP as a job-development and placement tool was an unexpected benefit that merits further study.

The Vocational Information Profile has proven to be an extremely viable counseling and placement aide during the pilot project conducted by the Oklahoma City Northside local office. Two program administrators who continually make use of the OESC services praised VIP and its use for their needs. Attached are time study comparisons of VIP and existing services. It is my opinion that this program could enhance greatly the services offered by our agency. Speculation concerning entry of condensed information in the applicant work

history data in STARS (other skills, abilities and interests) warrants further exploration.

VOCATION INFORMATION PROFILE
TIME AND STAFFING ANALYSIS

	GATB/VG SCANNER	GATB/VIP SCANNER	GATB/VIP RAWS MANUAL INPUT
Film	1 Staff 10 Minutes	Same	Same
Registration	4 Staff 50 Minutes	Same	Same
I-9 Cert (Group)	4 Staff	Same	Same
511 Final Review (Per File)	1 Staff 90 Seconds	Same	Same
I-9 Final Review (Per File)	1 Staff 10 Minutes	Same	Same
GATB	2 Hr. 45 Min.	Same	Same
Scoring (Per File)	1 Staff 8 Seconds	Same	Same
Test Card Filing (Per Card)	1 Staff 45 Seconds	Same	Same
Job Search Workshop (Per Group) Current System	1 Staff 2 Temps. 6 Hours	Same	Same
OAP Profile Preparation (Per File)	1 Staff 4 Minutes	N/A	N/A
Group Presentation and Career Guidence Inventory	1 Staff 40 Minutes	N/A	N/A
OAP Posting (Per File)	1 Staff (T) 4 Minutes	N/A	N/A
Guidance Profile Completion (Per File)	1 Staff 4 Minutes	N/A	N/A

Continued on next page

Continued

	GATB/VG SCANNER	GATB/VIP SCANNER	GATB/VIP RAWS MANUAL INPUT
Veteran Service Workshop (Per Group)	3 Permanent 2 Temps. 6 Hours	Same	Same
VET V.G. Assessment (Individual) (Per Client)	1 Staff 25 Minutes	N/A	N/A
Interest Checklist (Individual) (Per CLient)	1 Staff (V) 15 Minutes	N/A	N/A
Interest Inventory (Per Client)	N/A	1 Staff (V) 15 Min.	1 Staff (V) 15 Minutes
GOE Research & Copy (Per CLient)	1 Staff (V)	N/A	N/A
Occupational Outlook Research & Copy	1 Staff (V) 12 Minutes	N/A	N/A
Client Couseling (Per Client)	1 Staff (V) 10 Minutes	1 Staff (V) 10 Mln.	1 Staff (V) 10 Minutes
HOURS WORKED PER CLIENT	**17 HOURS 15 MINUTES**	**13 HRS. 45 MIN.**	**13 HOURS 50 MINUTES**

(V) - Veteran

COMPARISON HIGHLIGHTS

INDIVIDUAL V.G. INTERPRETATION		25 Minutes
GUIDANCE TO OCCUPATION EXPLORATION		12 Minutes
	Total	37 Minutes
as compared to		
VOCATIONAL INFORMATION PROFILE		8 Seconds
Savings	36 Minutes	52 Seconds

OCCUPATIONAL APTITUDE PATTERN PROFILE PREPARTION		4 Minutes
PRESENTATION AND CAREER GUIDENCE INVENTORY		40 Minutes
OCCUPATIONAL APTITUDE PATTERN POSTING		4 Minutes
GUIDANCE PROFILE COMPLETION		4 Minutes
	Total	52 Minutes
as compared to		
VOCATIONAL INFORMATION PROFILE		
Savings	51 Minutes	52 Seconds

VETERANS VALIDITY GENERALIZATION ASSESSMENT		25 Minutes
INTEREST CHECKLIST		15 Minutes
	Total	40 Minutes
as compared to		
VOCATIONAL INFORMATION PROFILE		
Savings	39 Minutes	52 Seconds

Veterans in the work force in the year 2000

by Alonzo Philmore

A major step in providing employment to Florida's veterans was taken on March 10, 1988, when the Department of Administration filed for adoption of the Veteran Preference in Appointment and Retention in Employment Rule, Chapter 22VP-1 of the Florida Administrative Code.

This rule sets forth guidelines for applying veterans' preference in employment by the state and its political subdivisions. The spouse of a totally and permanently disabled veteran, the spouse of a person missing in action receives preference in employment and retention should a layoff occur. The rule provides for a complaint procedure as well as legislative powers for the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs. In order to help with the administration and enforcement an experienced senior attorney has been assigned to the Florida Department of Veteran's Affairs.

We believe this rule will prove to be significant tool in enabling Florida's veterans to exercise their lawful rights into the year 2000 for employment purposes. Since it became effective March 10, 1988, it has become a major factor in veteran employment by state, county and city governments. The Florida Career Service Employment Application has been re-designed to accommodate the ruling.

Alonzo Philmore is a Local Veterans' Employment Representative in the Lake City local office of the Florida Department of Labor and Employment Security. He was a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program specialist for seven years prior to his current position.

There have been many complaints, investigations, and reversals in the employment process as a result of this new ruling. We feel veterans throughout the United States should be made aware of this new code so they might urge the representatives in their states to do the same for them. The 1990s will be years of significant technical change in the workplace. Veterans will have to upgrade their skills and education for employment during this decade. Without the proper training and education veterans will be forced into accepting low paying, menial-type jobs.

We, as veterans' representatives, should be counseling and urging veterans to take advantage of any and all types of vocational and technical training available. Remember, even with the new ruling veterans must meet the minimum requirements for preference in appointments and retention.

Veteran Service Representatives need to urge veterans with educational benefits to use them wisely. One of the greatest challenges for will be to assist veterans in preparing for the future and guiding them along the right path to gaining better and more meaningful employment. To put it more bluntly, **be more specific**.

The Florida ruling has given LVERs and DVOP's new tool with which to work. We now have a new topic to discuss at veterans' organization meetings, JSEC meetings, and other presentations. We are communicating with state, county and city governments, and already some have revised county codes and city charters to give veterans' preference in appointment and retention.

Again, veteran representatives in Florida suggest LVERs nationwide to promote a veterans' preference ruling similar to that in Florida.

CARS and CAP: employment programs for veterans that produce results

by Jim Grass

We in the California Employment Development Department are proud to be in the forefront of providing services to veterans. This happy state of affairs is in large part due to the administrators in EDD who are committed to veterans' employment programs and are willing to allow the influx of new ideas and initiatives. As a result, mainline EDD staff created two innovative programs that are attracting national attention because of their success in assisting veterans find employment. These programs are the Centralized Applicant Referral Service (CARS) and the Career Awareness Program (CAP).

CARS, an effective job-placement program for veterans, is designed to facilitate the recruitment and placement of qualified veterans into federal employment through special authorities specifically tailored to appoint veterans to noncompetitive federal Civil Service positions. These authorities are:

- 5 CFR 316.402 (b) (5). Veterans with a service-connected disability rated 30 percent or more by the Veterans Administration, and
- Public Law 99-574, 5 CFR Chapter 307. Veterans Readjustment Appointment (VRA).

Jim Grass is the manager of the California Employment Development Department Liable Interstate East Office. Grass also is the California IAPES chapter chair for Veterans Affairs and the vice-chair of the International Veterans Committee.

To be VRA eligible the veteran must have been on active duty between Aug. 5, 1964 - May 7, 1975, and have received other than a dishonorable discharge. The veteran must have less than 14 years of education or no more than 60 semester hours of upper-division college. For those receiving compensable disability the education restriction is waived.

CARS a cooperative venture

In California CARS is a cooperative venture between the Employment Development Department, the U.S. Department of Labor-Veterans Employment and Training Service, the federal Office of Personnel Management and federal employers. The program was developed as a one-stop center for eligible veterans who are interested in federal employment. Instead of the inconvenience of having to visit numerous federal agencies throughout the area, the veteran applies at just one location, the CARS office.

The benefit for the federal agencies is that they can call the CARS office, list their job openings and have eligible veterans referred who meet their job requirements. This means substantial savings to the participating federal agencies in terms of personnel staff costs.

It should be noted that the federal agencies are not required to hire CARS referrals. The usual Job Service standards for care in selection and referral are fully in effect. This makes it imperative that CARS centers carefully screen applicants to ensure that they meet employers' hiring requirements.

The history of the CARS program shows a definite evolutionary progression going back some seven years. In April, 1982, the Disabled American Veterans Employment Service program was started in California as a cooperative venture between EDD, the Disabled American Veterans, DOL-VETS and OPM. Under the DAVES program, federal agencies could hire qualified disabled veterans with a 30 percent-to-more, service-connected disability without regard to civil service registers and without any prior clearance form OPM. Federal agencies could place job orders directly with OPM. Federal agencies could place job orders directly with EDD field offices. This included both permanent and temporary positions and was not restricted by grade level or to a particular period of military service. The DAVES program started as a pilot program in Sacramento and was expanded statewide in the summer, 1982.

In the spring, 1983, under the leadership of EDD, discussions among the agencies that created the DAVES program led to the development of a wider concept. A decision was made to conduct an experiment to determine whether a centralized location could be established to register and refer both 30 percent or more, service-connected disabled veterans and VRA eligible applicants. Out of these discussions and experiments the concept of CARS was born, and McClellan Air Force Base near Sacramento was selected to house the first CARS center. In many ways this was a superb choice since McClellan AFB has about 14,000 civilian employees, many of whom are blue-collar or production workers. The North Highlands EDD

office, the largest EDD office in Sacramento, is within a mile of the main gate, and the McClellan personnel staff and administration were and continue to be highly supportive.

The center was staffed by EDD Disabled Veteran Outreach Program staff from the North Highlands office and began operation in late June, 1983. Participating federal agencies were McClellan AFB, the Sacramento Army Depot, Mather Air Force Base and the Sacramento District Army Corps of Engineers.

Establishing CARS

What steps are necessary to establish similar CARS centers in your area?

First, identify the federal agencies and the number of civilian federal employees in the area. The experience in California is that the highest use of CARS centers has been with Department of Defense agencies. This is due to several factors: their budgets are more stable; and veterans in need of CARS assistance usually have skills that can be used by DOD agencies.

Experience also has shown that the best results are obtained in metropolitan areas. Higher population and urban areas generally have more veterans available for the civilian labor force, as well as having more large federal employers that frequently have vacancies or turnover. We have found that collocation with a large federal agency that has a large number of civilian employees is vital. This collocation allows the CARS staff to develop an office staff at these locations and other federal agencies in the area. The word about good work does get around.

Another essential step is to schedule informational and procedural meetings. One should be with SESA administrators and local Job Service staff to inform these key players of the program's purpose, to answer any questions and, most important, to get them to buy into the concept. Items that must be covered are how to report placement credit, how to make referrals, when and where to give SF-171 workshops (federal job application) and other like procedural matters.

Another meeting should be between the OPM and the federal hiring agencies in the area. The agencies must be convinced the CARS program will benefit them and, specifically, how is it going to improve their hiring procedures. Unless the federal hiring agencies buy into CARS, it will not succeed.

Participation by veterans organizations is crucial. They should be fully informed of the program and an agreement should be reached that will result in an ongoing channel of communication. Veterans groups have newsletters and magazines that can be used to publish articles about the program. Finally, the Job Service must make a commitment to assign specific dedicated staff to the CARS center to make it work. In California all of t' e designated staff are DVOP specialists or Local Veterans Employment Representatives.

After the program is set up and operational, the procedures are simple and straightforward. All applicants are initially screened at the CARS center to determine their eligibility for VRA or the 30-

percent disabled program. If eligible for either program, the applicant is asked to complete a Standard Form-171, Application for Federal Employment. The SF-171 and a copy of the applicant's DD-214 are required from every applicant. We can't afford any invalid hires on this program. Those applicants who are receiving compensation for a service-connected disability must have either a letter from the Veterans Administration (dated within one year) or verification from the appropriate branch of the military.

Beginning with the applicants most recent experience, the SF-171 is reviewed and applications are classified by applying appropriate **Dictionary of Occupational Title** codes or federal government series identifiers. Applicants are given no more than two DOT codes, a primary and a secondary. Applicants have a one-year eligibility period and may on filing a new SF-171 extend their eligibility year to year. Priority in referral is made as follows: 1) 30-percent-or-more disabled veteran, 2) disabled veterans, and 3) Vietnam-era veterans.

CARS results

Statistical data is important. What has CARS accomplished in California. From January, 1984 - August, 1989, the CARS centers in California have received more than 10,000 job openings. During that period 6,334 veterans were placed in these jobs. Of these, 4,700 were VRA eligible and a remarkable 1,674 were 30-percent-or-more disabled (more than 26 percent of the total).

There is also a real-world CARS. The experience in California is that about 95 percent of the positions are temporary, not to exceed one year, and most of the positions are entry level, WG-5 and GS-5 or below. However, 40-50 percent of these positions are converted to permanent within one year and many others can and are extended by a subsequent appointment. This caveat is not intended to detract from the program, but merely to advise LVERs and DVOPs that they should encourage eligible veterans to utilize both the CARS noncompetitive federal hiring program and the usual OPM competitive Civil Service procedures.

If you want to establish a viable CARS center, there are a few tips for ensuring success. First, the CARS center must establish credibility with the federal agencies in the area by making good, sound referrals. CARS staff must be knowledgeable about federal hiring practices, and they must educate veterans on how the system works. Finally, wherever possible the CARS Center should be collocated with a large federal agency that has a large number of civilian employees.

For additional information about CARS, contact the CARS unit in Sacramento at 916/338-5152 or write the EDD CARS Center, 4695 Watt Ave., North Highlands, CA, 95660.

Career Awareness Program

The second of these innovative California veterans' programs is the Career Awareness Program. It was conceived and developed by Patrick Ford while he was working in the Hanford EDD office in 1978.

Ford is now the program manager for the Career Awareness Program in California. While working as a DVOP he came to the realization that many veterans separating from the service were, in fact, making a career change without the research and guidance necessary to make a successful transition to civilian employment.

Historically, veterans leaving military service have encountered employment problems in the transition to civilian lifestyle. The CAP has been developed specifically to assist separating military personnel in making the transition from military life to civilian employment with the least possible delay. In effect the goal is to make individuals civilian job ready when discharged from the military.

The Career Awareness Program as it is now constituted is a five-day course offered to every veteran within one year of separation from active military service. Military information is provided the first day, and civilian information is given the next four days. The military information is devoted to military pay, benefits and allowances. The civilian sessions are directed to providing job search skills necessary to compete in the civilian labor market, including applying military skills to the civilian job market, how to write a job resume, how to fill out a job application and how to participate in a job interview.

The classes emphasize individual participation and each participant submits a resume, completes a job application and role plays a simulated job interview. These are all critiqued, and the participants are provided advice on their progress. This is generally done on the last day of training.

Disabled American Veteran linkage

Recently we recognized that an added dimension to the program was needed in order to properly serve personnel who have physical handicaps and disabilities. A link was established with the Disabled American Veterans who contributed staff and a grant to establish additional classes. The DAV staff provides information concerning rights and benefits of disabled personnel. In addition each participant can request to have medical records reviewed.

Another strong link in the CAP chain has been established with the California Employer Council, an umbrella organization of local Employer Advisory Groups. The Council potentially represents some 700,000 employers in California. A special Veterans Employment Committee has been established by the Council to stimulate employer participation in employment of veterans in the private sector.

Since it began in 1978 at Lemoore Naval Air Station, the program has expanded to serve 29 bases in California and three in Washington. More than 27,000 students have attended, and about 60 percent of the participants successfully enter the civilian labor market within 90 days of their separation. A secondary fallout is the increased retention rate enjoyed by the military. At Lemoore the retention rate climbed from 18 percent to 24.2 percent.

This type of program can work elsewhere if dedicated staff are willing to go that extra mile in serving veterans. A great deal of marketing and selling in professional presentations were made to the

military commands, employer organization, local colleges, veterans' organizations and the Job Service.

For additional information about CAP, contact Patrick Ford, director, Career Awareness Program, 217 Seventh St., Hanford, CA, 93230, 209/584-0257.

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